Bulletin—

of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

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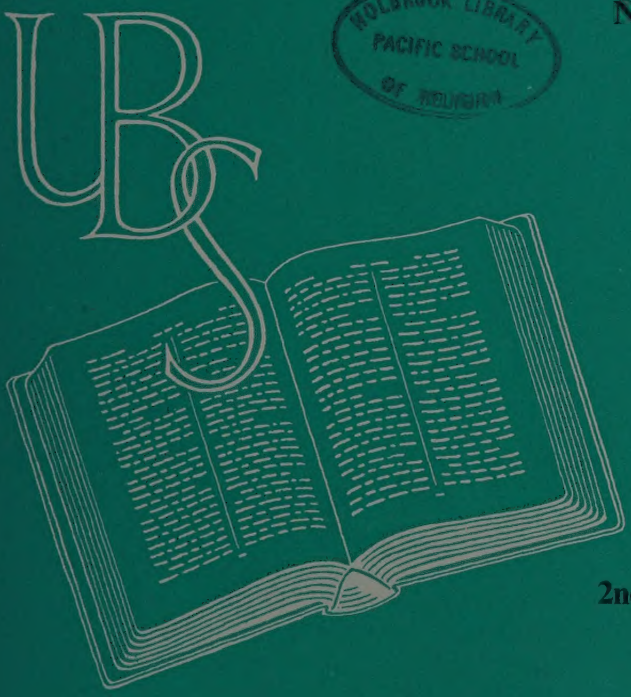

2nd Quarter
1960

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UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES

BULLETIN

SECOND QUARTER - 1960

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Contributors to this issue

Dr. Ivan Nothdurft is Secretary of the joint Bible Society Agency for Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay.

The Rev. J. A. Weeks is Secretary of the joint Agency, Bible Societies in the Near East.

The Rev. J. T. Watson is Assistant General Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

The Rev. H. L. Henriod is President of the Swiss Bible Society.

The Rev. A. Hauge is Secretary of the Norwegian Bible Society.

The Rev. T. Miyakoda is Secretary of the Japan Bible Society.

The Rev. E. G. Alves is Secretary of the Bible Society of Brazil.

Mr. A. Dale is on the staff of the Norwegian Institute of Christian Education.

Mr. J. S. S. Malelu is President of the Bible Society of India and Ceylon.

Conferences and Meetings—

an inescapable necessity—a dangerous tendency

Olivier Béguin

BIBLE SOCIETY WORK is not as simple as it used to be. On the mission field, the growth of the churches, the gradual increase in standards of living, the development of literacy, the explosion of nationalism, the economic inflation, the setting up of trade and customs regulations, the development of social and welfare legislation, the renaissance of ancient religions, the appearance in the field of new groups engaged in Scripture distribution, face Bible Society agents and secretaries with an increasing number of difficult problems which were largely unknown to their predecessors fifty years ago.

But in traditionally Christian areas also, considerable changes are occurring. A materialistic outlook has infiltrated into all aspects of life. Secularism has become widespread. The Bible itself in the eyes of the great majority has lost its relevance. At the same time, however, a new interest in the Scriptures is fermenting in many sections of the Roman Catholic church; Protestant theology is teaching a new approach to the Scriptures as the Word of God; continental European Bible Societies have been challenged to recapture their former missionary outlook and to assume their share of the world-wide task. And here, too, Bible Society agents, secretaries and Board members find themselves placed in rapidly changing conditions, brought out of their former routines, forced out of their traditional ways of thought and action.

Thus, in face of so many changes and uncertainties, Bible Society executives at all levels of responsibility all over the world feel the need to learn how others in similar conditions tackle the problems and at the same time encourage circulation, streamline their work, secure and improve the churches' collaboration and support. They demand to be able to share their concerns with others who have similar problems. They see that in many other fields of human activities, executives and experts meet to deliberate about their difficulties on a regional, continental or world basis, whatever the case may be; they recognise the value of such meetings. Thus, in the last fifteen years or so a number of meetings of Bible Society secretaries and staff have taken place at the regional level, sometimes occasionally, sometimes as a regular event. Reference to some of them will be found in the pages of this *Bulletin*; others could have been mentioned. None of these meetings has taken place under the auspices of, or at the instigation of the U.B.S. Yet they all partake in that general attitude of co-operation, exchange and cross-fertilisation of ideals and experiments which has been called a U.B.S. spirit and for the encouragement of which the U.B.S. as an organisation was founded.

In other cases, the U.B.S. sponsorship has been requested though the initiative and organisation remained with the Societies themselves, as in the

International Bible Society Youth Conference in Landskron in 1958, or for the 1957 Woudschoten consultation for A.B.S., B.F.B.S., N.B.S. and N.B.S.S. staff and committee members. The U.B.S. ideal provided the kind of rallying point most appropriate for achieving the aims envisaged in arranging such meetings.

Finally, another way of coping with the demands of the day for increased consultation, for mutual advice and encouragement and of facing the challenges presented by widening of horizons, was sought through meetings organised directly by the U.B.S.: local or regional conferences, consultations on particular subjects related to Bible Society activities. Such gatherings were not self-centred occasions but simply another way of broadening and encouraging the Bible Societies' fellowship and efficiency in very much the same way and with the same purpose as was happening in the other kindsof gatherings referred to above.*

* * *

U.B.S. conferences and gatherings thus are part and parcel of a more general evolution which is to a large extent a new feature in the work of the Bible Societies, just as it is for all kinds of trades and associations, secular as well as religious. But "conferencitis" is a dangerous modern disease. It could well have formed the subject of a chapter in the famous *Parkinson's Law*. The world is full of conferences which solve nothing and just meet and meet, adjourn and meet again. And many tend to recommend the holding of a conference as the panacea for all their ills and problems. Nothing could be more self-defeating and fatal for the Bible Societies than to allow themselves to drift along that stream without proper check and control. (Yet stubbornly fighting against the stream would be equally debilitating and self-defeating!) Committees, therefore, are right in being watchful. The Bible Societies for themselves and the U.B.S. on its own level, try to keep a suitable balance in planning for and authorising the holding of conferences and meetings. Great care has been and is constantly taken to ensure that there is full warrant and justification for such gatherings. It was for this reason that meetings of the U.B.S. Council, with its representative membership drawn from all over the world, were, after four years of consecutive sessions, spaced out with a longer intervening period. They were planned first for a two years' interval; then three; now three to six. The membership of the Standing Committee, which used to meet yearly, had also been fixed in such a way as to allow for sufficient attendance regionally to make it unnecessary for most members from other parts of the world to spend money and time on costly and tiring travel. For the same reason regional conferences have been favoured instead of a multiplicity of world gatherings and have generally been arranged in such a way as to be related to a U.B.S. administrative meeting. Thus one could take advantage of the presence of delegates from other areas and with their help get across to church leaders of a given area who were unfamiliar with Bible Society work something of its problems and tasks and outlook. In the same way A.B.S. and B.F.B.S. General Secretaries and others attending sessions of U.B.S. Standing Committee or Council in some distant part of the world could use that opportunity for calling together the heads of their agencies overseas in these areas for appropriate consultation.

* * *

* U.B.S. Council, Standing Committee and Sub-Committee (e.g. on Translation) meetings could also be reckoned in this category though attendance at them is limited to staff membership or appointed representatives of the member Societies involved. However, except in the case of Brazil no reference has been made in this issue to that aspect of U.B.S. activities.

It is not for the writer of this brief note to attempt to formulate a judgment as to whether or not a proper balance or distinction has been kept by the Bible Societies and the U.B.S. between "necessity" and "tendency". His concern here has been to outline the perspectives and to sketch the trends and the evolution so that the reader could look at this particular aspect of Bible Society activities in a fitting historical setting.

It is the same intention which has led to the preparation of this issue of the *Bulletin*, using, in part, material we already had in hand. The various contributions which follow and which we have tried to place each in its context, give us the personal views taken at random of some people who in one way or another have been involved in inter-Bible Society or inter-Agency or U.B.S. conferences during the last three years. No attempt has been made to have a report on every meeting of this kind which has taken place during that period. Nor has any systematic survey been undertaken of the results and follow-up of any of these meetings. Only the information which came our way has been reported. The following articles deal with very different types of conference and meeting; they show very different kinds of approach. Our aim will have been covered if in this way the reader has been helped to become more familiar with that particular aspect of Bible Society work which often, at first sight, might easily look remote from our central task, and also to recognise and sense the real value of such confrontations for the furtherance of imaginative thinking and action in the interests of the cause we are all concerned with: the wider circulation of the Word of God.

Staff Conferences in Latin America

Bible Society work in Latin America was fully reorganised in 1936 *when the American Bible Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society General Secretaries, Dr. E. M. North and the late Dr. J. R. Temple, paid a protracted visit to that part of the world in which their two Societies were active and set up the work on the basis of Joint Agencies. In this way each Society could share in the overall responsibility. At the same time direct administration responsibility was allocated to one or the other of the two Societies.*

Some three years after the war a secretaries' conference was arranged in Cristobal (1953) *for the workers in the Caribbean area. The meeting was also attended by the secretaries from Peru and Bolivia. A number of suggestions were made with the intention of facilitating co-operation, particularly in the production of publicity leaflets.*

Four years later another meeting covering the whole of Portuguese-, Spanish- and French-speaking Latin America took place in Sao Paulo, immediately before the U.B.S. Council and Latin American Conference. A progress review was made, and a fruitful exchange of information and experiences on the various aspects of Bible Society work took place. In the following note, **Dr. Ivan Nothdurft** *summarises what he feels, three years later, the permanent values of the meeting to have been*:

SOMEONE RECENTLY SAID at a farewell party for a friend that it wasn't the 'farewells' which bothered him but the 'meetings'. Yet within the round of meetings which one is obliged to attend come those which one considers as invaluable experiences.

Such a meeting was the Latin American Secretaries' conference in Brazil in 1957. Although specific results are difficult to measure one cannot fail to appreciate several positive benefits. These might be summarised as follows:—

1. There was a rich fellowship and sharing of personal experiences.

   (*a*) The value of contacts with world leaders of the Bible Society family is inestimable.

   (*b*) Sharing with fellow area secretaries contributes a sense of unity of purpose and a spirit of co-operation and understanding.

   (*c*) A vision of the world scope of our work is made increasingly clear.

2. There were practical results in improved methods:

   (*a*) A more or less general agreement was reached for prices and discounts. One no longer hears the complaint that in such and such a country larger discounts were offered, etc.

   (*b*) An exchange of publicity materials was begun in Sao Paulo. This has been most effective and we hope it will serve as an initial step for providing supplies for publicity and visual aids in Spanish. It is hoped that a centre may be established for the preparation and production of such materials.

   (*c*) Improved colportage methods were suggested, such as presenting packets of books, etc., for sale as well as individual books. Proposed techniques have been applied effectively.

   (*d*) Suggested methods for collecting accounts have been useful.

   (*e*) An exchange of ideas for developing the programme of advisory councils and work committees gave a basis for organisation. A more active participation in regional committees which, while differing in tactics, has helped organise the work for more direct support for the Bible cause.

   (*f*) Intensification of work through correspondents and encouraging and maintaining a good relationship with the workers has been a positive result of suggestions made.

   (*g*) Developing a programme of promotion through interchange of plans and results in other areas where 'promoters' are at work has proved helpful in planning for the future organisation of the work in this area.

These are some of the direct and indirect results of the Brazil meeting which for us made it extremely worthwhile. They do not in any way exclude the inspiration received from many fine addresses or improvements made in adjusting organisational machinery, etc., but the items mentioned are rather concrete examples of results of the conferences which are more easily identified in the apperceptive mass. Other concomitant results are even harder to measure, but I am sure that all agree that the overall contribution of the meeting was exceptionally favourable.

A New Pattern for a new situation in the Near East

The Bible Societies in the Near East is the new title for the former A.B.S.-B.F.B.S. (joint) Bible Lands Agencies. The Bible Societies in Iraq, Lebanon, Greece, etc., replace the name of the former Sub Agencies. The change is significant inasmuch as it reflects a difference of approach to Bible Society work and to its relations to its immediate surroundings. It is an evolution which, during the last few years, has taken place all over the world. In Asia, the A.B.S. Agencies in the Philippines and in Thailand are now called respectively the Philippine and the Thai Bible Houses. The Unidas Sociedades Biblicas in Latin America have been renamed: the Bible Societies in . . . . . and the country. The same is true for the Congo and the Cameroons.

The change of name which has taken place in the Near East is part of a new comprehensive evolution of the organisation of the work itself in some of the Near East countries. Those modifications before being implemented have been discussed by the agents and secretaries concerned in staff consultation held over the last six or seven years. A first important staff conference, including colporteurs, took place in Jerusalem early in 1955. *A closer co-ordination of operations in certain aspects of the work was contemplated. The political disturbances which occurred in* 1956 *and after considerably modified the picture of Bible work administration in the area. In the autumn of* 1958 *another small staff conference was called together at Kifissia, near Athens, to look at the best ways for implementing the co-ordination envisaged in Jerusalem. A number of proposals were put forward. They followed two directions. On the one hand they were suggesting a specialisation of some of the Sub Agents in one or another aspect of Bible Society work in addition to their regular administrative responsibility as Sub Agents; on the other hand they envisaged such Sub Agents exerting their specialisation for the benefit of the whole area. Such a pattern of international specialised co-operation represented a new and rather revolutionary scheme in Bible Society thinking; it was reviewed at a later date by a small group meeting in Cairo and has since begun to be put into practice.* **The Rev. J. A. Weeks,** *the Secretary for the area covered by the Bible Societies in the Near East, reports as follows on the progress made since Kifissia:*

AT OUR STAFF CONFERENCE in October, 1958 we, like Moses on Nebo, caught a vision of the land ahead. Unlike Moses, however, we hope to be able to see this land of vision possessed. We feel that at least the following results have been accomplished in the intervening months which are traceable to the influence of this conference.

Our men in the area know each other better. Names on correspondence and invoices represent living persons. This doesn't solve all of the problems of communications nor guarantee understanding in itself, but it helps !

The seeds have been sown in our minds of thinking of our work in the Near East as a whole, working co-operatively with other wholes, rather than just as a personally, locally or nationally-centred activity. Ours is an area being convulsed with problems as complex or more so than those, for example, which

convulsed the United States of America in its first years of independence. There are many and powerful forces at work to divide us. Opportunities to pray together and plan together are a force directed toward uniting us.

In some areas of our planning no visible results may be seen but even there we hope that germination is taking place. In some other areas, however, these seeds have broken forth into visible seedlings. Mr. Accad from Lebanon was able to carry on profitable church-relation contacts with and for our work in Egypt. Mr. Psiloinis of Egypt received excellent co-operation in Lebanon and Jordan in a distribution-survey trip, the results of which we feel will benefit our whole area. Mr. Nilson in Istanbul is compiling materials for a united approach in the area to problems of visual aid materials and personnel training. Mr. Siraganian of Jordan compiled an excellent paper on publicity materials for the whole area which was presented to our staff at a meeting in Cairo. Some of its ideas are being carried out. A start has been made in training employees of one area for a period of time in another area to help them broaden their outlook of our work.

In the area of organisational structure we have moved more slowly but those persons responsible for such decisions are informed of our problems and our recommendations so that conservative planned progress is being made.

The accounting structure is being altered to fit the pattern of reorganisation being evolved. More people are sharing operational responsibility than before even where the number on our staff is the same. It is our sincere belief that, when consummated, the new arrangements will free the men in charge of our programme development in each area from considerable detail while at the same time providing more prompt and usable reports for administrative control.

We feel that our staff men are growing in their jobs and as they learn more and co-operate more it is our sincere hope and belief that they will begin to feel more secure, more useful and more satisfied with their opportunities to work together. Occasional opportunities to get together are essential to such growth and progress.

Through the fifteen months of work which have intervened since the Kifissia Conference we have never forgotten the inspiration received in its atmosphere of prayer and fellowship ; nor has the far reaching vision of the possibilities of our work in the Near East faded.

In the light of realities we have encountered "in the valleys" we have had to readjust some of the details of the plans we formulated "on the mount" but we have not had to alter the main course and the result has been, we believe, real progress.

Reflections on Secretaries' Conference in Africa

Fifteen years ago the whole work north of the Sahara and Ethiopia and north of the Union of South Africa was administered direct from London Bible House, except for the Rhodesias, which had an agent in Salisbury. To-day one counts five Agencies for the area—including Salisbury. But Africa's evolution moves so fast that even this very recent pattern of administration is proving insufficient. Bible Houses have to be built ; additional store-room is to be provided ; local staff must be appointed ; distribution and support have to be more closely organised. To gain a broad view of the situation, and to take stock of to-day's problems and to-morrow's opportunities, consultation proved indispensable. Thus the first conference of secretaries working in Africa met in November, 1958, *called together by the B.F.B.S. and presided over by the* **Rev. J. T. Watson,** *at that time Assistant General Secretary of the B.F.B.S.*

Eighteen months after that memorable gathering, Mr. Watson gives us some reflections on its sinificance.

THERE IS AN OLD JIBE about committees just *sitting and passing minutes,* presumably wasting time. This taunt could not possibly be levelled at the Secretaries' Conference held in Africa just over a year ago. On the contrary, it is interesting to reflect on some of the achievements resulting from our deliberations. Let me set them down in some order.

1. *The deepening of the sense of fellowship in the common work.*

Members of the Conference spoke, at the time, of the joy they all found in meeting and talking together with their partners in the work. This sense of fellowship has become more real since Salisbury. Our brethren in the Union have seen more clearly the opportunities and the difficulties of their colleagues north of the Limpopo and those engaged in the work in Equatorial Africa have a far better understanding of the work in the Union. All the secretaries, I think, have been encouraged and challenged by the work being done by "the other fellow". It is often said that the work is one as the world is one. To see this and to feel it acutely is great gain.

2. *The Million Gospel Campaign.*

Undoubtedly the most spectacular outcome of the Conference was the decision to initiate a campaign to distribute, in addition to our normal circulation, a million Gospels amongst those who at the moment are quite outside the hearing of the Gospel. The more I personally reflect upon this campaign and engage in it, the more I believe it to be the leading of God. At a time when Africa is moving boldly forward towards some Promised Land it is surely providential that an awakened church should be pointing to Him Who is the true and living Way.

Readers of this *Bulletin* may be interested to learn that, at the moment, 1,286,000 Gospels are being produced to meet the demands for Scriptures in 65 languages. Over 600,000 Gospels are being produced in Great Britain in 55

different languages whilst various presses in Africa are producing another 600,000 Gospels in 10 different languages. These Gospels are going out in a variety of covers. The quantities called for vary from editions of 50,000-150,000 in languages like Hausa, Swahili, Zulu and Suto, and on the other hand small quantities of only 1,000 copies for little-known tribes like Gu Alada in French West Africa and 2,000 for the Ila tribe in Rhodesia. As to the cost, printers' estimates are available for only 1,188,000 Gospels to date, but this quantity commits the B.F.B.S. to an expenditure of £25,808.

Some of the first of these Gospels have been used amongst the Hausa-speaking people in Northern Nigeria, where the chief translator (Cyril Sanderson) himself has sold nearly 24,000 copies. He writes: "We shall need many more thousands to evangelise effectively the north of Nigeria". English Gospels with attractive flower design covers are also being used in large quantities in both East and West Africa. The Billy Graham organisation paid for 8,000 to be flown to Nigeria for Crusade meetings.

It is often said that the Gospel is "the cutting edge of evangelism". If this is really true, is it not "the bounden duty and service" of the Bible Societies to furnish copies to the churches so that these latter in turn may fulfil their mission?

3. *A new concern for the wider distribution of the Word.*

We spent more than one session at Salisbury considering the challenge of other faiths: Animism, Islam and other -isms, Communism, Secularism—and were disturbed to see the growth and vitality of these enemies of the Faith. We thought and prayed much about our response to this challenge and out of it has come a new awareness of the need to be far more diligent than we have been in the past to see that the Scriptures are got out to the people needing them. Perhaps this is not the place to go into this in detail, but all kinds of plans are afoot to see that this end is achieved. They include such obvious measures as more specialised staff, more attractive books, better marketing facilities, etc.

4. *The "indigenisation" of the work.*

By this somewhat cumbersome phrase, I refer to a fundamental matter in Africa to-day. If Bible Society work is really to take root, in the "Dark Continent", as we all hope it one day will, it has ultimately to be shared at all levels with our African brethren. At the moment—let us face the fact—it is not so. The Conference, therefore, gave a great deal of thought to this matter and I know all who took part at Salisbury are continuing to give it thought. We have not got very far as yet with practical proposals for the simple reason that the task before us is not as straightforward as all that. African leadership is wanted everywhere at the present time, in government, in commerce, in the Church, and of course there are not sufficient leaders to go round. But "it is in our hearts to do this thing" and preliminary steps are now being taken to bring it about. The Conference heard of the growth of Auxiliaries in East Africa and the Rhodesias; there are existing ones in West Africa, and out of these must come the members of Area Advisory Councils and of course, some day, Bible Societies.

Turning over the pages of the Conference minutes, I am amazed at the wide range of our deliberations. I well understand why the brethren who were present expressed the wish that it would not be too long before another opportunity were given them of again conferring together.

Three countries—One language

Dear Editor,

FOUR TIMES A YEAR your *Bulletin* brings us discerning articles which are often worth while reflecting upon. These are followed by a number of news items, country by country. My reading of the *Bulletin* always begins with the national news, for it illustrates the activity which we are all called to engage in. Occasionally it can serve to encourage us to get out of our rut in order to take a new path.

This is what started me thinking that your readers in other countries would perhaps be interested in the particular experiments—because they were made jointly—made by three neighbouring countries in which the same language is spoken and in which more and more a close collaboration has been built up during the past five years. This collaboration has enabled us to realise achievements which none of the three Societies could have undertaken in isolation. The facts are briefly as follows:

On the occasion of a visit to Paris at the beginning of 1954, the director of the Evangelical Society of Geneva—now also President of the Swiss Bible Society—had occasion to discuss with the General Secretary of the French Bible Committee a joint meeting of their respective colporteurs—a project which at that time seemed audacious. The meeting took place the same autumn, at La Chartreuse de Valbonne in the form of a weekend retreat, described by one of the participants as "three profitable days spent in the freest fellowship, in work and joy". The programme of Bible study, prayer, the exchange of experience, unity of witness—in spite of the variety of the participants and of their denominational affiliations—lively discussions on "the ministry and problems of the colporteur" concluded naturally with a communion service. There was one unanimous recommendation: that such a retreat, lasting at least eight days, should be held each year.

This wish has been realised. We could no longer dispense with these opportunities of re-dedication, the more so since the following year the gathering was enriched by a new partner: the Belgian Bible Society. Thus we meet together, year after year, with our Bible missionaries of France, Belgium and Switzerland, numbering about thirty in all, in one or other of the three countries. A varied programme enables us to deepen our acquaintance and enlarge the horizons of one another. The Bible studies play an important part in achieving this result; the Holy Communion is celebrated each year; but the programme varies from year to year. The 1958 programme was rather special, being linked with a three-day visit to the World Exhibition at Brussels in order to discover, among other things, the limited place occupied there by the Bible. During three days we alternated study of our own problems considering the lessons to be drawn from visits to the Exhibition, (such as the urgency of our ministry in a world obsessed with techniques and man's achievements in the material realm) with visits to the Exhibition itself, where nevertheless the Belgian Bible Pavilion gave a fine witness.

Next summer, this time in Switzerland, the number of participants will be doubled on account of the wives of colporteurs having also been invited, and where their family problems will have a place in the programme.

Also at the request of our Bible distributors, we produce a modest quarterly bulletin, "Témoins et Solidaires" which, by giving news about each individual, facilitates intercession on behalf of one another.

My dear Editor, you are familiar with these annual gatherings, since you come to them from London—or even from the Far East—sometimes accompanied by one of the secretaries of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and know that in this way our programme is enriched with news of the living and recent activities of the Bible Society throughout the world.

It was these camp-retreats which encouraged us—again at the request of our Bible missionaries—to set up a six months Bible Colportage Course, which took place at the John Knox Foyer in Geneva, from October, 1956, to Easter, 1957. The programme included not only "knowledge of the Bible" and "knowledge of the present-day man", but also some practical experience of colportage. This enterprise benefited from your excellent advice, dear Editor, as well as from the moral and practical support of the great Bible Societies—the British and American. You will not forget that the teaching given at this course—in French, naturally—and recorded on tape, could be used for other similar courses if the need of such should be felt.

Another outcome of our annual camps is the preparation of a "Manual of Bible Colportage". Beginning with brief chapters on the basic vocation of the colporteur, it continues with chapters on the aim and conduct of the colporteur, and some guidance on the replies to make to the numerous objections met by the colporteur during his visits. This manual has required extremely careful preparation, and the Bible missionaries have contributed to it their daily experiences.

In order to interest young people in Bible distribution, last year we got together, again the three countries, a good group for a Colportage Camp lasting two weeks, in Corsica. Under the leadership of a French pastor, these young people were trained by those with extensive knowledge of colportage. It was a wonderful experience for all who took part.

One project at present in hand is that of producing a joint Bible catalogue for our three countries, including mainly editions in French, but also a selection of those published in other languages.

And finally—although this is not a tripartite effort—we may also mention the co-operation which the Bible Societies of Belgium and Switzerland have practised for a number of years in providing the services of a Bible distributor-evangelist for the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and for the German-speaking parts of Belgium, who is included in the team of Belgian Bible missionaries and supported financially, and also morally, by the Swiss Bible Society.

* * *

We may well ask ourselves whether this joint work would have developed as it has, had one or other of us not been called to work within the fellowship of the United Bible Societies, in a sense inspired by that body and indeed by yourself, dear Editor. This is why we think that these co-operative experiences of our three Bible Societies might interest your readers in other countries, since the Council of the U.B.S. meets in Grenoble next May and we shall meet together there also for a regional conference of the Latin countries.

In the name of the three co-operating secretaries,

Yours fraternally,
H. L. Henriod.

Co-operation in Scandinavia

With the following contribution we turn to a different aspect of Bible Society co-operation.

For several years the Secretaries of the four Scandinavian Bible Societies (Danish, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish) have come together annually in order to exchange information about developments in their own work and to consult about the possibility of joining in projects of one kind or another. Yet, unlike what happened in the French speaking areas, only very few concrete measures resulted from such contacts.

In 1955 *a U.B.S. Regional Conference had taken place in Boldern. A number of Swiss pastors and laymen had been invited to attend. One of the most striking results of that enterprise was that it led to a definite reorganisation of Bible Society work in Switzerland, to the creation of the Swiss Bible Society and to that Society eventually taking a modest place in Bible work in other countries. Strengthened by that experience, the Scandinavian Secretaries suggested a similar experiment for their own area. Thus, in the summer of* 1958, *a U.B.S. conference for the Scandinavian countries was called together in Hurdal Verk (Norway) at which representatives of the Boards of the Bible Societies, of the churches and of the Home and Foreign Missions were invited to meet with their own staff members and with a few visitors from other Bible Societies. The Norwegian Bible Society, which has taken a lead since* 1950 *among the European Continental Societies in answering the challenge to co-operate in the world-wide task, had also accepted the responsibility for all the material arrangements of the conference as well as for part of the financial commitments. A year-and-a-half later we have asked the* **Rev. A. Hauge,** *General Secretary of the Norwegian Bible Society to consult with his Scandinavian colleagues and let us know whether some fruits could be detected of the Hurdal Verk gathering. Mr. Hauge has sent in the following remarks under the title: Fruits?*

INSPIRATION TO ENGAGE in an extended activity on the part of the northern Bible Societies was the single goal aimed at for the U.B.S. Regional Conference at Hurdal Verk in Norway, August, 1958. The secretaries of these Societies had for some years had joint annual gatherings, one of them attended by the U.B.S. General Secretary. Realising that it is the secretaries who always represent the Societies at the U.B.S. meetings, and that the Board members will for the most part be little affected by the reports given, the question arose as to whether a U.B.S. Regional Conference could not be arranged, at which a maximum number of Board members could meet and become acquainted with the U.B.S. and with the global task of the Bible Societies.

The Hurdal Verk Conference was the answer to that question. From Denmark, Norway and Sweden a majority of the Board members met, and the Boards of the Finnish and the Icelandic Bible Societies were also represented. In addition representatives of missionary societies and free churches were invited.

Achievements

Now, one year-and-a-half after the Conference, it is asked: What happened at the Conference, and what has happened since?

Letters received by the organising Society from a majority of the delegates were unanimous in their expression of gratitude for the possibility given to become acquainted with the world-wide Bible work, and for the inspiration received to share in this work, which surely would bear fruit in the future work of the Societies.

Even in tropical climates it may be early to look for fruit only a year-and-a-half after the seed is sown. In the north we at any rate have to count with several times that period for growth and ripening. Nevertheless, at the meeting of the northern Bible Society secretaries in Stockholm in October, 1959, the question of fruits was the first point on the agenda.

The reports from the four Societies (Iceland was not represented) told about growth and ripening.

In the report of the Rev. A. Alvestrand, Assistant Secretary of the Swedish Bible Society, the general situation was characteristically expressed: 'At Hurdal Verk the Swedish delegation was quite convinced of the necessity of a thorough rethinking as to the goal and the ways and means of the work in the old Societies. The immense need of Scriptures all over the world is calling for an effort also from the S.B.S.'

Organisational structure

Realising that an extended missionary Bible work makes other claims on the organisational structure than an exclusively domestic Scripture distribution does, the Societies have begun to make various attempts to meet these claims. Only two of the Societies have until now had full-time secretaries and their own premises. In the Swedish Bible Society they have agreed on the necessity of appointing a full-time secretary as soon as the various plans and projects are ripe for carrying out. In Finland and Sweden negotiations are going on with the independent diocesan Bible Societies, aiming at a close connection and co-operation. In Norway steps have been taken to try to draw in wider circles of the church and of the free churches.

Collections

The Danish Bible Society has for many years had the privilege of a New Year collection in all Danish churches. After the Hurdal Verk Conference it was decided to devote this collection to missionary Bible work instead of using it for domestic distribution. The Swedish Bible Society has requested the Swedish Church and the free churches to institute a common Bible Sunday with collections in all churches. In Norway the importance of Bible Sunday has been stressed especially in the city congregations. For the first time a common Bible Sunday was arranged in the capital, observed by some 80 per cent. of the congregations. In connection with Bible Sunday, inter-denominational Bible meetings have been arranged, always with an unusually large attendance. The collections increased in 1959 by one third, from Kr.150,000 in 1958 to Kr.200,000.

Projects

The Danish Bible Society and the Swedish Bible Society have, through the national missionary Councils, made inquiries as to the need of financing translation work and of other Bible aid on the mission fields connected with the national missionary societies. The Finnish Bible Society has also been in touch with the missions. FM.800,000 has been granted for the translation of Scriptures into Rukuangali, a language used in the field of the Finnish Missionary Society

at Okoranko, South Africa. Another FM200,000 has been granted for distribution of Scriptures in Swedish among the Swedish-speaking population in Finland.

The Norwegian Bible Society has assumed responsibility for the production of the New Testament in Iraqw (Tanganyika), a translation nearly completed and much needed by a Norwegian mission. The hope is to win the interest of the supporters of this mission also for Bible work.

In consultation with the American Bible Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society, the No.B.S. has appointed a Norwegian, P. O. Mydske, as secretary for the newly established Joint Agency Uruguay-Paraguay. The D.B.S. and the S.B.S. have expressed a wish to share with the No.B.S. in the work in South America, and at the secretaries' meeting it was agreed to examine the possibility of taking over joint responsibility for the salaries and allowances to the Agency secretary. The secretaries also agreed to look for new projects suitable for Scandinavian co-operation.

Inland Bible Mission

The reports also gave information of new activities within the national borders. Plans for daily Bible reading and outlines for Bible study groups are being prepared in Sweden. In Norway the promotion of Bible study groups has been intensified by the appointment of a promotion secretary for north Norway. The membership of groups now in being is estimated at 2,000. A travelling Bible exhibition which has been used for some time in Sweden is now to be improved, and a permanent exhibition in the capital is in preparation. In Stockholm a Bible institute has been established aiming at spreading better knowledge of the Bible.

Fruits all the same?

Realising that most of the plans and activities mentioned above could scarcely have been reported had a Regional Conference not taken place, it looks as if we are nevertheless allowed to talk about fruits of the Hurdal Verk Conference. Even if many of them are not yet ripe, the essential fact is that they are ripening.

The five northern countries together comprise 20 million inhabitants. When the Bible Societies in those countries put into practice the wider vision of Bible Society responsibility which they gained at Hurdal Verk, they can be expected to take a substantial share in the global task.

What We found in Singapore

The Rev. T. Miyakoda, General Secretary of the Japan Bible Society, sent us some time ago a copy of an article he had prepared after his return from the All-Asia Regional Conference held in May, 1959, in Singapore. In an earlier issue of the Bulletin (third quarter 1959 No. 39, p.150 onwards) large extracts of the findings of the Conference were reproduced. Later in this issue the reader will find extracts from one of the papers which most significantly help us to see the way in which many in Asia regard Bible Society work in that part of the world.

In 1952, the United Bible Societies held a meeting of its Council in Ootacamund, India. In connection with it a Conference was held at which a good number of representatives of the Bible Society of India, Pakistan and Ceylon and of the churches of those countries were present. The accent was mainly on co-operation between Bible Societies and churches in Scripture distribution. On that occasion a number of Bible Society secretaries and agents from other parts of Asia also attended the meeting. Three years later the American Bible Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society organised a meeting of all their workers in Asia. General problems of administration came under consideration and particularly the vexed problem of the supply of Chinese Scriptures to the nearly twenty million Chinese scattered all over South-East Asia. The possibility of these workers coming together biennially received favourable consideration. In 1956 the U.B.S. Standing Committee was held in Indonesia and the A.B.S. and B.F.B.S. took that opportunity to call their agents to Bandung and review with them the progress made since Singapore. Moreover, joint sessions attended by the members of the Standing Committee and by those secretaries in Asia were held, focusing attention on reports on the work in the various countries represented and on the total challenge which Asia offers to the Bible Societies.

Singapore, 1959, was the next step. Again a meeting of the U.B.S. Standing Committee (attended by four Asian members—including Australia—one Vice-President and the representatives of the A.B.S., B.F.B.S. and Netherlands Bible Society) served as such an occasion. This time the Societies involved agreed on the desirability of inviting, besides the Societies' secretaries and agents, one member of the local Board or Advisory Council. A few Church representatives also attended on their way back from the meeting of the East Asian Christian Conference in Kuala Lumpur. Bible Society problems were examined in common by subject rather than by countries and some attention was given to the place the Asian Bible Societies have or might eventually assume in the world perspective of our task.

This is how **The Rev. T. Miyakoda,** *as an Asian, now reports to other Asians on his experience in Singapore:*

THE EAST ASIA REGIONAL CONFERENCE was held from May 26th to June 2nd in Singapore, following a meeting of the East Asia Christian Conference. This Conference in Singapore was a historic meeting in many senses. It was the gathering of representatives from all South-East Asia Bible Societies. Pakistan from the west, Japan from the north, New Zealand from the south—in all fifteen national Bible Societies and Agencies were represented there. Besides the Asian Societies the older Societies—the British and Foreign Bible Society, the American Bible Society and the Netherlands Bible Society—

were also represented. Altogether delegates from eighteen countries were present in Singapore. This was the first time in Bible Society history that such an Asian Conference had been held, and that staff and board members from these Bible Societies and Agencies had come together, with their national consciousness and sense of national responsibility.

"The conquest of the air by the aeroplane, radio and television that has reduced distance and pierced curtains, has led Asians to discover themselves, their common problems, aspirations and destiny. After centuries of subjugation Indians, Pakistanis, Ceylonese, Burmese, Indonesians and Filipinos have come through the stormy night to the dawn of a new world to learn that as children of the same Mother Asia they belong to each other and share the same joys, needs and hope".

These words formed part of the opening speech of Bishop Isabelo de los Reyes, of the Philippines, and chairman of the conference.

People of Asian nations are now thinking of their history and ancient heritage. With the call, 'Return to the National Culture', the old religions—Buddhism, Hinduism and Mohammedanism—are working to restore their former prestige which they had somehow lost with the coming of western culture and the Christian religion.

Bible Societies in each of these countries together with the Christian churches and missions are meeting with hard times. While pushing their Scripture distribution they have been meeting with the newly arising antagonisms which were never so strongly felt while their countries were under the control of strong western countries. Hitherto Asians have attended such international meetings in the shadow of the older western groups, receiving help with their speeches and in other ways. This time, although most of them are not yet absolutely self-supporting nor independent, in Singapore they were like independent national representatives. The western secretaries were behind them, or sat beside them.

The language of the conference was English. To most Asian representatives this was a great handicap (except for members from India and the Philippines where for so many years English had been their official standard language). But even with this disadvantage, they spoke and expressed their ideas in their broken English very courageously. They went on, sometimes, to denounce the western luxurious ways of living as obstacles or stumbling blocks for Christian evangelism.

At Singapore the Asian representatives acted independently in relation to each other. They recognised their neighbouring Societies as equal brothers engaged in the same work. Until this time they had looked upon each other and communicated with each other through the older Societies. Now they found that they should make contact with each other directly on an equal basis. Thus Asian representatives really enjoyed the conference.

During the ten days conference many reports were made and statistics were shown. Through them Asian representatives came to realise the severe and hard situations with which they are faced and in which they have to struggle.

Bishop Isabelo de los Reyes characterised the Asian conditions with the following words: "Asia, in these days, despite its newly acquired freedom,

remains tormented and confused by the conflicting ideologies and the mixed forces of progress, reaction, science and religion that affect every aspect of human society".

First, Asians came to realise that half of the world's population live in South-East Asia—1,800,000,000 people. That is the number of the people to whom God is asking them to distribute the Scriptures. For those people what has been the number of Scriptures distributed yearly? In 1958 Asian Bible Societies distributed 5,700,000 copies of the Scriptures, that is, one copy for 300 persons. Of these, 1,800,000 copies were distributed by the Japan Bible Society, mostly to Japanese. The numbers handled by the other fourteen Societies would be smaller.

From the reports we learned that there had been a resurgence of the old religions and that the Communists had been advancing in many countries. With all of them their social and economic situation is not stable. The Christian churches—a small minority in the total population—are struggling in face of those vast numbers of heathen peoples. Many people in Asia are still illiterate, and even those who can read are so poor that they cannot buy Scriptures at the prices asked.

Many Societies have been importing Scriptures from the older Societies. But in many of the countries which have achieved political independence the importation of Scriptures from abroad has been stopped. The Bible Societies in those countries were therefore obliged to publish Scriptures inside their own countries, and are suffering from the poor standard of publication. These are the hard conditions which the conference obliged the Asian Bible Societies to face. They came to Singapore with their national pride. But they were taught that they were very small, weak and powerless among the vast non-Christian population. They went back to their homes with a deep sense of humility.

On the other hand the Asian representatives found at Singapore a new consciousness of the need for mutual aid and co-operation among themselves and with the world fellowship of Bible Societies. While Asians found that they were weak, at the same time they found that each Society has its own special gifts, and that those should be shared with others. By sharing and helping each other they can stand fast against outside gigantic forces.

The following projects are the outcome of the conference, leading to greater solidarity for the Bible Society movement in New Asia. The conference recommended that the Asian Societies should establish one or more publishing centres in Asia so that they could share in the available publishing facilities. The proposal for establishing a colportage study centre was another project with the same purpose in view. The need was felt for deeper study of the method and spirit of colportage. Various methods of distribution have been adopted by various Bible Societies. These should be studied with a view to applying them according to the different circumstances in each country. They also felt the need of studying more closely the problems which Asian Societies are handling, and the conference suggested the appointment of an Asian Study Secretary for their area for the study on The Place and Use of the Bible in the Churches.

Finally, the Asian Bible Society representatives felt anew the importance of co-operation with the older Societies which had been so helpful in making it possible for the Asian Bible Societies to stand on their own feet, as they do to-day. The aids and support from the older Societies like the British and Foreign Bible Society, the American Bible Society and the Netherlands Bible

Society had been received as a matter of course until very recently. Their aid to the Asian Societies had been expected by the latter as normal. But to-day the aid from the older Societies is sought only after careful consideration and accepted with heartfelt gratitude, is received as a means of helping towards extending Bible Society work in the area and making it more self-supporting.

Bishop Lesslie Newbigin, newly elected General Secretary of the I.M.C., has pointed out, "There is developing a larger regional self-consciousness which would have been impossible thirty years ago. The peoples of East Asia are beginning to feel themselves in some sense a unity. Similar feelings can be sensed in Africa, Latin America and—of course—the Islamic world. It is natural and right that Christians should also feel their way towards forms of association through which the Christian responsibility for the life of man in these newly articulate groupings may be expressed.

The development of regional organs of ecumenical consultation and action may provide the opportunity for a more effective awakening of the whole Church to its vast unfinished task in Asia and Africa. 'One Body, One Gospel, One World'."

Those words of Bishop Newbigin exactly express the ideas and ideal of all who attended the Singapore conference. We pray that good results may come from these forward steps.

It is interesting to note that a direct result of the discussions at Singapore has been an offer made recently by the Japan Bible Society to print, and share in the cost of, Scriptures for Indonesia. Another has been the decision taken by the U.B.S. Standing Committee to appoint the Rev. S. J. de S. Weerasinghe as Study Secretary for Asia, for the study on The Place and Use of the Bible in the Life of the Churches. A third has been some practical steps taken in various countries to increase circulation; as for instance in Burma, with the appointment of a new colporteur, and the efforts being made to find more; or, in Thailand, the project now under consideration of the motorisation of one or two of the more able colporteurs. In the Philippines classes on colportage for volunteers from the churches have been envisaged, but these have not yet been started. Similar plans are being worked out in Japan and a permanent institute for the training of colporteurs—voluntary and full time—is being contemplated. In Indonesia too, plans are under consideration for the increase of colportage work and possibly the launching of a Bible boat. And in Burma again the Society is on the look out for a secretary who would promote the interest in and the good use of the Bible, visit schools and colleges and in these and other ways promote sales and circulation of the Scriptures. The practice followed in some Asian countries to give copies of the Scriptures to graduating students who will accept them is also now being considered in the same or in a different form in other countries where such a policy has not hitherto been followed. Thus the Japan Bible Society is planning an extensive effort of distribution among high school students of the Sermon on the Mount in diglot form—Japanese/English. An effort to produce even more attractive editions of the Scriptures is also reported from various parts and more colourful covers are already being used, responding to the impetus given by the discussions, private and in plenary session, which took place in Singapore on the subject. The Japan Bible Society, in order further to improve the quality of their publications, is sending its production manager to study Scripture production techniques in the U.S.A. and some places in Europe for a few months this spring. The leaders of the J.B.S. not only expect from this an improvement in their production but they are also hoping to be able in this way to make available to other Bible Societies in the area the services of an expert in Bible printing, should such help be requested.

In the Wake of Rio

The Rev. E. Alves, *General Secretary of the Bible Society of Brazil, answering a query on the part of the Editor regarding possible effects of the publicity organised three years ago in relation to the U.B.S. meetings held in his country, jotted down the following notes in a letter:*

I DECIDED TO REPLY to your letter as though I were thinking aloud, with no idea of including anything for the *Bulletin*, as this would demand more accurate research and exact data, a task which I am not in a position to do just now. I only have rather general ideas concerning the matter. When the Council was ready to meet in Brazil, we ordered a small poster to be prepared, with the flags of all the nations represented in the Council, and mentioning the date of the meeting. We also gave a complete report in our magazine, *The Bible in Brazil*, mentioning the visits made by various representatives to some of the States of Brazil. This served as very good publicity for the Bible Society of Brazil, giving it more standing in the national evangelical community as an organisation linked with the important Bible Societies of the world.

In terms of prestige, the meeting of the U.B.S. in Rio de Janeiro in 1957 had a great effect. I believe that the visits made by various representatives of the Bible Societies and the information spread by the secular and evangelical press, including the magazine of the Bible Society of Brazil, had a much greater repercussion than the meetings and services of the Council itself, held in the various local churches, and which did not attract large audiences.

I place the meetings of the United Bible Societies in Brazil as one of the factors contributing to the increase in support for the work here.

Following are some significant figures: In 1955 we received an income from contributions amounting to Cr$1,389,900.00; in 1956, Cr$1,335,413.00, there being a slight decrease, but in 1957 the receipts were Cr$1,823,000.00—an increase of Cr$500,000.00—and in 1958 we received Cr$2,860,455.00. In 1959, we estimated contributions of Cr$2,250,000.00 and received Cr$3,084,336.00, thus exceeding our expectations by Cr$834,455.00. It is clear that various factors influenced the increase in these contributions, but the reaction in the churches and in the press to the meetings of the United Bible Societies, spreading information concerning the work of the Bible Society of Brazil and of its importance with relation to the other Bible Societies of the world, making of the work of the Societies not just a national concern but one which has an international interest and which serves to bring us closer to other peoples, must be appreciated.

I do not know what the psychological effect may be on other peoples, but as far as Brazil is concerned, I can say that all the organisations which are known to be connected with similar foreign organisations, and which form part of an international Council, are accepted and have a greater prestige than those which are doing a strictly national work. This prestige does not arise as the result of the work having come from outside, but rather from a national organisation which is collaborating at the same level and with the same importance as the similar organisations in the whole or in a great part of the world. I do not

know to what extent prestige in other countries means money, contributions and support for organisations in every sense of the word, but in Brazil prestige means support, respect and money.

Besides these advantages, I further note that a Council in which Societies from various parts of the world meet, makes the leaders of the national Bible Societies as well as other components feel that they are not alone or are not nationally isolated in a work which interests only one country or a certain people, but rather that they are collaborating in an international ambit, thus giving more meaning to the work, stimulating and really bringing home a sense of the importance of the task at home as well as for the work in relation to other peoples.

Naturally, besides these reasons there is a great advantage in the exchange of impressions received continuously, not only during the meetings and in the formal discussions of common business, but also on those fortuitous occasions when people meet each other and exchange impressions concerning their work, telling their experiences and listening to the experiences of others. Speaking for myself, I may say that a large part of the experience which I have acquired in the work of the Bible Society of Brazil was gained during travel and encounters with colleagues of other Bible Societies. In the last analysis, the contacts with other organisations and different peoples amplify our vision with respect to the work which we are doing, making us more resilient in our methods of administering our own Bible Societies.

In my ten years' experience in the Bible Society of Brazil I can say with abundant reason that a regional, general or world council of Bible Societies pays for itself in the varied experiences which it produces and the results and vision which are acquired by those who attend and who rub shoulders with colleagues in the same service. Even when it is impossible to be present for reasons beyond our control, we always like to know that companions with the same ideal are meeting, and discussing problems with respect to the work to which we have dedicated our lives.

Bible Illustration in Edinburgh

One of the outstanding occasions in U.B.S. activities during the last few years has been the preparation and holding in Edinburgh, in September 1959, *of a Conference on Bible Illustration. A special issue of the Bulletin* (*No.* 38, *second quarter* 1959) *was devoted to that subject. Already in* 1956 (*No.* 28, *fourth quarter*) *preliminary thoughts had been published on the subject, a lively discussion on it having taken place at the U.B.S. Regional Conference in Boldern in* 1955. *Here below we give an account of that Edinburgh Conference prepared by* **Mr. Aasmund Dale,** *of the Norwegian Institute of Christian Education.*

The problem of the illustration of the Bible has been the subject of real concern for many Bible Societies in recent years. In view of the increasing attractiveness in the presentation of all kinds of general literature, the need to make Scripture editions also equally or at least reasonably attractive was felt with increasing intensity. Moreover commercial publishers were beginning, at least on the continent of Europe, to count on the renewed interest for the Bible on the part of

the public and were producing an increasing number of illustrated Bible editions. Some Bible Societies felt they too should enter that field, if only to oblige the other Societies to maintain sufficient standards of quality and inspiration in their own editions. Finally, there was also a growing concern in certain churches and accordingly in the Bible Societies related to them, that insufficient incentive was provided by Christian bodies for Christian artists to produce works which would reflect their faith and supply the churches with artistic works of real value.

The need for a co-operative study of the problems related to Bible Illustration led several Societies to ask for the organisation of an international consultation on the subject. Several commercial Bible publishers and some Sunday School leaders were also interested in the project which finally materialised at Edinburgh. We hope in a forthcoming issue of the Bulletin to publish a few extracts from some of the papers read at the Conference. In the meantime, Mr. Dale's account will provide the reader with the view of a man whose activities are not directly related to Bible Society work.

THERE MUST HAVE BEEN A FELT NEED for a conference on Bible illustration, for the invitation issued by the United Bible Societies was accepted not only by Bible Society representatives from many parts of the world, but also by scholars in the fields of theology and the history of art, by private publishers, artists, missionaries, Sunday School workers and others engaged in Christian education.

The conference was not meant to deal with Bible illustration in the broader sense of different kinds of art having their source of inspiration in the Bible. Nor was the intention to deal with pictures used for catechetical purposes in Christian education (such as illustrations in religious instruction books, ffannelgraphs or filmstrips). We concentrated on illustrations used in Bibles or parts of the Bible. The conference underlined that for practical, financial and to some extent reasons of principle, we have to draw a line between editions issued by Bible Societies and editions issued by private publishers. There seemed to be agreement on the need to make different demands for illustrations published in complete and permanent Bibles from those used in Bible portions, intended for short term use. The Statement produced by the conference gives information on other aspects of the same theme. The same Statement also deals with the different kinds and purposes of illustrations which may be used in Bible Society editions, and points out clearly what a complicated matter we have to deal with.

Most of the delegates at the conference seemed to accept Professor Althaus' theologically based opinion that the second commandment is not in principle a warning against Bible illustrations, including pictures which are meant, by means of anthropomorphisms, to show aspects of God the Father and Jesus Christ. On the other hand, the conference generally also agreed that the dangers and limitations of illustrations which Professor Althaus pointed out, do in fact exist. Generally speaking, a picture is always a commentary. Already a strictly informative picture dealing with historical or geographical facts bears witness that the revelation of God (especially in Jesus Christ) belongs to history, having taken place in time and space. On the other hand, a Bible edition giving only this kind of picture is in danger of conveying to the reader that this is solely history and not a message relevant for us and our days. Nevertheless the conference considered this kind of informative picture to be of great value for a better understanding of the background of the biblical text and message.

The group discussions and plenary discussions seemed to show that the illustrations which aim at giving a biblical message are very much needed and are at the same time a most dangerous kind of illustration. In view of the fact that the picture, although intended to bring the true biblical message, also reflects the artist's limitations and one-sided, often incorrect, conception, the Bible publisher has to be very cautious in selecting illustrations. The choice of biblical texts to be illustrated may also reflect which parts of the biblical message one regards as of most importance.

From a catechetical point of view we are glad to see that the conference, also in the Statement of Findings, clearly underlines that the use of pictures in the Bible, and the value such pictures may have, is intimately connected with a conscious teaching of how to read pictures. This will be the case on a very elementary level as well as on higher cultural levels. From an educational point of view one is also bound, as was many times stressed, to ask how far the Bible reader's background, cultural and religious, will make him read the picture in the wrong way. One should also bear in mind the consequences it may have in the long run if the Bible gives the reader not wrong, but one-sided, conceptions for instance of Jesus Christ.

Three other groups of problems were also at the centre of interest at the conference but in which thorough rethinking by all of us seems to be needed.

First : The relation to the modern artist and modern art. Various questions have to be faced : Is it true that we today have to use the 'language' of modern art if we are to be able to reach the modern man with the biblical message through pictures ? Or is it only a theory which has not been proved ? Are modern artists able to give the *biblical* content, or merely their own feelings ? What can we do to achieve a better and more intimate relation between the Church and modern artists, so that they may have the possibility of knowing what are the essentials to be depicted in pictures usable for Bible illustration ?

Second : Bible illustration and the artists in the 'younger' churches. The discussions and one of the lectures revealed the urgency for continued discussion on all the problems involved in this connection, but also the great possibilities which are at hand if the artists in the 'younger' churches can give a true biblical content through their art. As we well know, not all artists in the western churches have succeeded on that point. The problem, whether Christ should be depicted as an African, European, Indian or Jew does not seem to be the most important point in this connection, although it is a question which has some theological aspects of value.

Third : The century of 'visual aids' and how to reach our generation with the gospel. Are the Bible Societies right in answering the demand for 'more pictures' with more pictures ? Are they obliged to do so if they are to be able to convey to the new generation the content of the Bible ? Or are we in danger of being blinded with an illusion ? Are we, while recognising the immense importance of good biblical illustration, instead of bending our knees before 'visual aids', to take the more demanding way of teaching and educating people to grasp the living truth in the Bible through steady reading ?

None of these problems could be given the time and attention needed. But together with all the other unsolved problems we have more than enough topics for study conferences on a national or regional level.

Well prepared lectures together with group discussions and plenary meetings gave the theme of the conference and its sub-themes such a treatment that we returned to our countries with quite a lot of new problems and with a more living consciousness both of the dangers and of the possibilities which Bible Illustration for our time involves.

A.D.

There has not been time in the few months which have elapsed since the conference took place for any appreciable developments to have taken place as an outcome of it. The conference itself was rather widely reported in religious news services and papers. The addresses of Prof. Althaus and Prof. Lehmann have already been reproduced in theological journals in Germany. Various publishers have since been considering taking steps leading to the production of illustrated Bibles or illustrated Scripture books. The matter of Bible illustration has also in many placed and in many ways received increased attention, as in Finland, for example, where even a broadcast programme was devoted to it, or in the U.S.A. where the American Bible Society Translation Department is organising a special exhibition containing some of the best exhibits which were on show in Edinburgh, or again in Switzerland where the churches and Bible Societies are working on a decorated marriage Bible and where consultations and exhibitions are being held in this connection.

In France also reports on the Conference have aroused keen interest and the French lecturer at Edinburgh, Mr. P. Eberhard, has been asked to adapt his paper for reading at a gathering of newspaper men. T.V. has also shown interest in an Easter programme centred on Bible illustrations. Mr. Eberhard's magazine *l'Illustré Protestant*, besides giving an extensive report of the Conference, devoted two articles in last winter's issues to Bible illustration, the one by Professor Lehmann (Halle-Est, Germany) on Christmas illustration by artists from the "younger" churches, the other reproducing a number of Bible illustrations by a young East German artist (A. F. Lehmann, the son of the professor) which were on show recently at a religious art exhibition organised in East Germany.

In Denmark a new illustrated church magazine contained in its first number a long article on the Bible and Bible illustration by Dr. K. J. Jorgensen, the Danish Bible Society representative at Edinburgh.

As regards Scotland itself, the Rev. J. Chisholm of the Department of Extra Mural Studies in Edinburgh, who played a key part in the arrangements for the three interwoven events of last year : the Exhibition and Conference on Bible Illustration and the competition of illustrations of Bible themes, sums up the situation as follows:

I have been surprised at the number of people who have commented on the Exhibition and also on the television features which took place in Edinburgh and in Glasgow. Judging by this I should say that the general effect was extremely good. A number of educationalists have been interested, but this has been much more in the way of discussion or enquiry rather than by producing any direct effect in the presentation of biblical material.

Mr. Chisholm also reports the receipt of a letter from "a group of artists in the Hague who had been intensely interested in what was happening and wrote asking whether it might be possible to hold an exhibitilon of their graphic art in Scotland. These artists incidentally were members of a Christian group."

It is interesting, finally, to note that some Societies have already been in contact with, or are examining the possibility of doing so, some of the winners of the competition on Bible illustration and that for Bible Society posters. The Belgian Bible Society, for instance, has already produced a new edition of the New Testament with an illustrated paper cover and also a Bible jacket ; in each case the design was made by a competitor whose works were shown in Edinburgh. We already referred in the previous issue of the Bulletin to the interest shown by the KLM airline in a Dutch artist prize-winner in one of the categories. In Switzerland, the Swiss Bible Society is preparing a filmstrip on "Swiss artists illustrate the Bible", and in Sweden, the Bible Society has asked Professor Hamberg (who spoke at Edinburgh) to write a contribution for the annual report of the Society. The possibility of publishing in Sweden some of the papers read at Edinburgh is also under consideration. At the same time, the Swedish Bible Society is completing the preparation of a second illustrated Gospel in magazine form with a new set of pictures. Finally a report has been received from Malaya describing the interest created in the schools by the children's competition for Bible illustration organised in relation to the Edinburgh Conference. Children in Singapore and Malaya won 41 prizes, which took the form of B.F.B.S. Jubilee Bibles and valuable Bible helps.

Asia and our Global Obligation

J. S. S. Malelu

The following pages contain some extracts from a paper which, through lack of space, has not appeared sooner in the Bulletin. *The paper was read at the Singapore Conference by the Chairman of the Bible Society of India and Ceylon, Mr. J. S. S. Malelu. It offers a clear picture of some of the significant trends of thought noticeable in recent years among Asian and other Bible Society leaders.*

ASIA STANDS TO-DAY at a crucial period in her history. The 'unchanging East' is changing fast—moving rapidly we know not whither. We face to-day the challenge of Communism and active opposition to religion on the one hand, 'secularism' and indifference to religion on the other, side by side with which there is a renaissance or resurgence of some of the ancient faiths of Asia—Hinduism and Buddhism (not to speak of Islam) taking on an aggressively militant form, often copying successfully Christian missionary methods.

Over and above this there are problems arising out of the rapid political, social and economic changes taking place in this part of the world—the attainment of independence resulting in new political set-ups in certain areas and unsettled conditions in others, the rising tide of nationalism identifying itself in some instances with the dominant religion of the country, industrialisation and urbanisation, growing labour unrest, the loosening of family and community ties, etc., etc.

As against this it is heartening to find in many areas a growing interest in the Bible. In my country large numbers are enrolling for postal correspondence Bible Study courses, offers of presentation copies of the Gospels or the New Testament to new University entrants and graduates are readily accepted, public

libraries and libraries connected with educational institutions are asking for copies of the Bible, newspaper evangelism is resulting in many interested enquiries, the rapid advance of literacy in many areas is presenting opportunities for a wider circulation of the Word of God, special opportunities for evangelism are opening up in Korea and Okinawa, among the hill tribes of Taiwan and Assam and the non-Muslims of Indonesia. There is a growing hunger and a growing need for the Word of God.

Surely the Word of God *is* the answer to all those problems and situations, our most effective weapon of both offence and defence—a two-edged sword as St. Paul calls it. Bible Society work is indeed vital to life and growth of the Church, and must expand from year to year, involving inevitably a progressively heavier strain on our material resources.

By and large, however, the Christian Church and community in Asia is poor—in numbers as well as in material resources. We have therefore inevitably to look to our brethren overseas—the old Churches and Bible Societies of the West—for assistance. Nor do we make an apology for doing so. It is no shame for the younger and weaker brother to look to the older and stronger for assistance, and after all, the interests of the common task we are all engaged in—viz. making the Word of God readily available to every man in his own tongue, and widely known, read and loved—are paramount and must take precedence over any other consideration.

It *would*, however, be a shame if we were to regard this state of our financial dependence on large annual subsidies from abroad with complacency and rest content with what is surely an unsatisfactory state of affairs. It is most emphatically our moral and spiritual obligation—a duty we owe to ourselves as well as to our brethren overseas who have so generously been helping us all these years—that we should progressively and rapidly reduce our financial dependence on them and stand on our own feet.

This is moreover no matter of mere sentiment and national prestige, or even moral obligation. Christianity is in most countries of Asia regarded by and large as an alien religion, and the fact that its practice and propagation needs to be so largely financed by funds from abroad emphasises and proves in the eyes of the non-Christian public its alien character. Furthermore, there is no knowing when restrictions may be clamped down on influx of foreign funds for 'religious propaganda' purposes. What will happen to our work if, for some reason, beyond our control, this external aid is cut off or drastically cut down It is essential therefore that we take stock of our internal resources and assess their latent potentialities.

Having established the general background of Bible Society work in Asia and the serious problem created by the discrepancy between the needs and the resources at present available locally, Mr. Malelu turns to his first point: the necessity for the Asian Bible Societies to see as their "first and foremost obligation . . . . to strive towards taking over full responsibility ourselves for Bible Society work in our respective lands, reduce our dependence on external aid and try to stand on our own feet". To that effect Mr. Malelu then describes in some detail the ways in which the B.S.I.C. is trying to raise and increase local support: Bible Society local branches, women's work, individual membership, a "Bible Society Day", one-pice-a-day scheme, rallies, bazaars, interesting and enlisting young people in the work, educating the churches and their ministers, etc. Referring to the last mentioned, Mr. Malelu continues:

This is more a spiritual than a financial problem. Obviously we need to tackle the pastor first and convert him into an enthusiastic supporter of the Bible Society. We need also to instil in him the faith that by interesting the members of his congregation in missionary and evangelistic enterprises outside the narrow limits of his own congregational activities the church finances will not in the long run suffer. The members of the congregation too need to be educated in the stewardship of money and to feel a responsibility for the work of the Bible Society and of evangelism in general as part of the total Christian enterprise which it is their bounden duty as Christians to support. All this may sound elementary, but in Asia the problem of self-support looms so large on the horizon of the Church that other causes, however deserving, tend to fall into the background. Yet it is a matter of real urgency that we progress as rapidly as possible towards financial self-support.

However, it must be admitted that self-support is an elusive goal. The problem is similar to that which the Government of many of our Asian countries are facing in their effort to raise the standard of living of their people—the results achieved by means of an intensive campaign of planned economic development over a period of years being largely offset by a simultaneous substantial increase in the population. The Governments are trying to remedy this by advocating birth control, but the Bible Society is not in that happy position. While on the one hand we are endeavouring to obtain increased financial support from within our borders in order to *reduce* our net deficit, on the other hand we are at the same time doing our best to *increase* that deficit through our efforts to increase circulation and by expanding our activities in other directions, e.g. undertaking translation, publication and distribution projects which cost money.

Nevertheless our efforts in both directions (increasing circulation and reducing the net deficit needing to be met from abroad) must go on. With the increasing challenge, and increasing opportunities, that are presenting themselves for a wider circulation of the Word of God in Asia, we dare not curtail our activities and apply the pruning knife. Exercise economy, yes: but stint we dare not. And I do believe that with a growing awareness on the part of the Church and the Christian public in our lands of their primary responsibility in regard to this matter, and with a more intensive effort on our part to tap our internal resources, we can bring into operation a sort of Malthus' law in reverse, and see that these internal resources grow at a rate faster than that at which our work must expand . . . .

While we do admit and urge that the Church and Christian community in the lands of Asia should and could take a progressively larger share in this joint effort than they are doing at present, we must nevertheless recognise the fact that in the existing circumstances complete self-support in regard to Bible Society work in our lands is neither feasible, nor (if I may so put it) desirable if it has to be attained at the cost of having to curtail our activities and put a brake on the expansion of our work. The continuance of financial aid from overseas is therefore inevitable and necessary if the task before us is to be adequately tackled.

In this connection, however, Bible Societies have to face the possibility of restrictions being imposed on the receipt of funds from abroad for Bible work.

Moreover the flow of large annual subsidies has the unfortunate effect of giving the impression to the public that it is always possible to count on the inexhaustible resources of the foreign Societies to meet the deficits. This impression unavoidably weakens or renders fruitless the appeals of the local Society for local support. To counter that demoralising effect Mr. Malelu goes on to propose three ways of building up, with foreign help, a permanent source of revenue in the countries of the subsidised Societies. He suggests the erection of Bible Houses yielding income from rented premises; the endowment of trust funds for specific projects; the supply of printing facilities or the setting up of well equipped presses under expert management.

I am really thinking aloud and am aware that there are practical and technical difficulties. Particularly a proposition like the third one must be approached with caution and a careful study of all the angles involved. I feel, however, that something on these lines must be devised in order to avoid the necessity of large remittances each year from abroad. It will also place our finances on a long term stable basis.

The idea of building up endowments for work of this nature has, of course, its pros and cons, and frankly, to my mind, the 'cons' would generally speaking appear to predominate. I would hate to see the work of the Bible Society financed mechanically through income derived from impersonal endowments rather than through sacrificial giving by Christian men and women. But in the circumstances in which we are situated, and considering the fact that even after mobilising fully our internal resources we shall still be faced with a good-sized gap which would have to be met for many, many years to come from outside sources, I feel that the building up of endowments to a reasonable extent would be fully justified—particularly in view of the possibility I have already referred to of restrictions being imposed on foreign aid.

After this, Mr. Malelu turns to what he considers to be the second obligation "equally important" of a Bible Society: the "share, however humble" which each Bible Society must take "in the global task facing the Bible Society movement".

Is there nothing tangible that we can do to take some little share in the global task before us—outside the narrow limits of our own national boundaries? Or must we for ever remain at the receiving end? Just before I left home an interesting suggestion was made to me by a friend keenly interested in the work of the Bible Society. Hitherto Bible Society work in the mission fields has been linked with and supported (in so far as external support is concerned) by specific parent Bible Societies. For instance the Bible Society of India and Ceylon received its external support mainly from the B.F.B.S., Thailand from the A.B.S. and so on. The next step was the development of co-operative effort between the supporting bodies, and in our case besides the B.F.B.S. the N.B.S.S. and more recently the A.B.S. are now co-operating to help us meet the needs of Bible Society work in our area. Why not take this collaboration further to its logical conclusion and let the U.B.S. function as the channel through which the Bible Societies of the world would pool their resources and administer aid where needed in a truly co-operative manner? If such an arrangement could be worked out, it would mean that a Society like the Japan Bible Society, or the B.S.I.C.would place its total normal needs before the U.B.S. and the constituent Societies of the U.B.S. would decide—through such machinery as may be devised—how

much can be given to each needy Society from a pool to which *all* the constituent Bible Societies would have contributed. Some of the constituent Societies would contribute to the pool more than they receive from it (if they need to receive anything at all), while others would receive more than they give. But the point is that every constituent Society of the U.B.S. would become a giving Society and be expected to give also—not merely to receive as so many of us are doing at present. The distribution and allocation of inter-Society aid would moreover not be the sole prerogative of the giving Society but would be a function co-operatively performed by all the constituent Societies of the U.B.S.—through, as stated above, such machinery as may be devised.

This would not necessarily mean destroying the traditionally close friendships subsisting between some of the constituent Societies—e.g. between the B.S.I.C. and its parent body the B.F.B.S.—nor would it preclude a giving Society from taking special interest in some specific special project or projects in the area of any of the other constituent Societies, and providing special additional funds to finance such special project or projects. It would, however, make the U.B.S. more fully and effectively a co-operative organisation than it is at present.

There are, I realise, practical difficulties involved in effecting such a change-over from the present system of unilateral giving (which no doubt has a greater appeal to the paternal instinct) to a system of giving through a common pool, but such a co-operative sharing of our God-given resources would surely be more in keeping with the Christian idea of stewardship.

Bible Society work in all our lands began, I suppose, with the establishment of Agencies of one or other of the older Bible Societies of the West, with the management and control vested more or less entirely in the parent body. Such remote control had for obvious reasons to give place in course of time to increasing decentralisation and devolution of responsibility on local shoulders, the natural culmination of which process was the establishment of autonomous national Bible Societies. This is in line with the policy followed in an increasing measure by the missions, of integrating with the Church in the land, and devolving the responsibility for Christian work carried on in any country on the Church in that country. This should help to develop a greater sense of responsibility in the Church for Bible Society work, stimulate initiative and enterprise in the conduct and planning of the work, a better assessment of the needs of the Church and the area and incidentally remove from the Bible Society the stigma of being a foreign organisation.

A most desirable development though this is, there are obviously certain pre-requisites to such complete devolution of responsibility. Unless there is a Church well established in the land with its roots in the soil, a reasonably large indigenous Christian leadership, such complete devolution is obviously neither possible nor desirable.

Mr. Malelu then ends his paper with some remarks on the relationship between parent and daughter Societies which should be one of association rather than control, the parent Society helping the national Society "to find self-expression and to manage its own affairs in its own way" in a true spirit of partnership in obedience.

News From All The World

Arabia

The Persian Gulf area has recently been visited by Mr. Fouad Accad, Associate Secretary in Beirut in charge of contacts with the churches on behalf of the *Bible Societies in the Near East*. This was the first official visit paid to that area by a Bible Society secretary. Mr. Accad spent nearly three weeks visiting the seven Trucial States, Bahrein, Kuwait and parts of Qatar and of the Sultanat of Muscat and Oman.

Valuable contacts were established in the Trucial States, where the only missionary activity is a missionary hospital — two more being under construction — and the work of a few devoted individual Christians mainly from the Oman Scouts (military forces). Owing to the dispersion of the population (about 150,000 in all) and the widespread illiteracy, Scripture distribution cannot be widely developed at present.

The situation is more encouraging in Kuwait (250,000 inhabitants) and Bahrein (160,000) with a mission bookshop in each place, where colportage might have some prospects. A colporteur evangelist is working in Kuwait's American hospital and clinic. Scripture circulation in Kuwait is relatively high, averaging nearly 1,000 copies a month.

Consideration is now being given by the Bible Societies responsible for the work in these areas to plans which would permit the intensification of the work.

Belgium

Dr. W. Lutjeharms, Assistant General Secretary of the *Belgian Bible Society*, recently reported on the activities of the twelve colporteurs working in Belgium. Five in Wallonia are active among French-speaking people; three in Flanders among Flemish-speaking people; one in Brussels; one among the coal miners, Italian- and Greek-speaking people; and two in the Eastern Cantons and Grand Duchy of Luxemburg, among German-speaking people.

The report begins by saying that "in our country the Bible is a book not too well known. There are still Roman Catholics thinking that Protestants are not Christians and that the Bible is a Protestant book and therefore dangerous . . . The attitude of the Roman Catholic clergy shows us all different forms from antipathy to sympathy . . . One priest was so angry that a colporteur was trying to sell Bibles in his parish, that he said he wished we were back in the time when Protestants were burned at the stake; he would certainly stir up the fire! On the other hand . . . a priest said, 'Give me your address and I shall send to you everybody who wishes to buy a Bible'.

" . . . Our colporteurs still feel that blessed influence of the testimony given by our Pavilions at the Brussels Exhibition. Thousands of people saw our Bibles there and received our Bible Portions and tracts. Very often people now say to the colporteur, 'We know about your work. We received a booklet. We should like to have a Bible' . . . One colporteur met a man in the market in a small town who bought the four Gospels. Some weeks later on this man came with his wife and wished to have a New Testament. This visit was repeated again and finally they bought a Bible . . . Now they have found the way to one of the churches in this district".

As in many other places in the world, the Jehovah's Witnesses complicate the work of the Bible Society colporteur. "As their behaviour is destructive, criticising State and Church in every form, calling their own books also Bibles, it is difficult for our colporteurs to explain that they are not Jehovah's Witnesses but Evangelical Christians".

The report ends "A great work has still to be done in this country where in the time of the Reformation there was such a great desire to read the Bible."

■

The Belgian Bible Society has published a translation in simple Dutch of the Epistle to the Romans, for use in the Flemish-speaking part of the country. The text has been prepared by the Rev. B. W. Canzevoort, a Board member of the Bible Society and a well-known evangelist in the Flemish part of Belgium. It is published as a 48-page illustrated booklet, under the title Vrijgesproken (Freely spoken), with a photograph of the Coliseum on the cover. Two thousand copies have been printed. The production of further portions of the Bible in a similar form is contemplated.

Brazil

The demand for complete Bibles is rapidly growing in Brazil since the new version was published last year. They are selling faster than New Testaments. The *Bible Society of Brazil* hopes to be able to print 300,000 copies. (There are restrictions on the import of Bible paper. Every amount over a given quota is heavily taxed on entry into the country. Paper production locally is not suitable for whole Bibles.)

Circulation in Brazil in 1959 amounted to 1,544,200 copies of which 211,000 were Bibles, as against 122,000 the previous year.

■

The B.S.B. has now issued as a separate volume the 45,000 line concordance which was prepared for inclusion in the revised versions of the Portuguese Bible. The publication has been well received.

*

In recent years, several Roman Catholic editions of the Scriptures in Portuguese have been published in Brazil by Roman Catholic organisations. The following have recently been reported:

Bible—new translation, based on the Maredsous version, 1959.

New Testament—1958 Hoepers 2nd edition, published by the Franciscans.

New Testament—1955, Pereira.

New Testament—1955, Soares.

Four Gospels—Hoepers, 1959.

Four Gospels—1957 and a set of the Gospels separately, printed in different format—1957, translated by Zioni.

Four Gospels—1955, by the Franciscans, and a set of separate Gospels and Acts from the same plates.

Cameroons

The Rev. Y. Schaaf, who was sent out to the Cameroons by the Netherlands Bible Society in August, 1959, reports that he has been able to open a Bible depot at Yaoundê and that he now has a freight lorry at his disposal, since it has proved necessary in the meantime that he should be enabled to carry substantial quantities of Scriptures into the interior.

Canada

The *British and Foreign Bible Society in Canada* makes available a copy of the Bible in Braille to any of Canada's 23,261 blind who want it, either free or at a charge of $9.75, the cost of production being $100.00.

*

One Auxiliary of the B.F.B.S. in Canada—that of Ottawa—has been greatly encouraged by the response to its attempt to introduce a system

of voluntary colportage. They found that many depositories scattered throughout the area were largely inactive, so decided to replace them by offering to the secretaries of the local Bible Society branches the opportunity to sell Scriptures at a discount. A number of the secretaries have thus become voluntary colporteurs at no cost to the Society. Their sales have been a considerable help in increasing the circulation of the Scriptures.

*

The B.F.B.S. in Canada presented a Bible to The Rt. Hon. John Diefenbaker recently, at a ceremony in the Prime Minister's office. In expressing his thanks for the Bible Mr. Dietenbaker spoke of his constant awareness of his need of Divine guidance and spiritual strength for the responsibilities of his office. He assured those assembled that the Bible was a gift he sincerely appreciated and that this Book, which he so highly valued, would have an honoured place in his office.

Cuba

The American Bible Society Cuba Agency reports the considerable success of two one-week Scripture distribution campaigns organised in Camagüey and Manzanillo (two cities in Central and Eastern Cuba) by Mr. Perdomo, the Bible distribution promoter of the Agency, who was trained at the Penzotti Institute. In each city Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostalist and Adventist churches co-operated in the campaign. In Camagüey 250 volunteers, in Manzanillo 60, were trained for and took part in the preparation of the campaign. Special services were held in all churches and time was obtained on the local radio during the week. Scriptures were circulated in house to house visitation and in the markets.

England

Mr. N. Bratt, Production Secretary of the *British and Foreign Bible Society*, reports that 3,567,753 Scriptures were issued from London in 1959. These Scriptures were despatched to 85 countries and territories all over the world. This quantity represents on an average one Bible, New Testament or Portion every two seconds of working hours (including overtime).

At the end of the first twenty-five years, the Society sent out, on an average, one volume every seventy seconds; at the end of fifty years, one volume every twenty-three seconds; at the end of seventy-five years, one volume every nine seconds; and at the end of a hundred years, one volume every five seconds.

*

As reported elsewhere in this issue, the B.F.B.S. is undertaking a Million Gospel Campaign for Africa this year. Half of the books needed will be printed in London in 39 languages, a few tens of thousands in 4-5 languages will be printed in Switzerland by the Swiss Bible Society and the remainder in Africa itself in 15 languages. Attractive coloured covers in various designs have been produced and special distribution campaigns are being organised by the B.F.B.S. field secretaries. The distribution to be carried out mainly by the churches and their members and the books are made available at a nominal price.

*

Following the example of Yeovil (cf. *Bulletin* 40, fourth quarter 1959, p.185) Councils of Churches in several other cities in Britain are now preparing for the holding of interdenominational Bible Weeks focussing on joint Bible Study. The Rev. E. H. Robertson, the U.B.S. Study Secretary, is in touch personally with about a dozen such projects, helping ministers and laymen to prepare for the effort.

*

For the first time the B.F.B.S. has produced a special poster for Bible Sunday 1960, the theme for which is

"Bread upon the waters"—the same title as that of the Popular Report. The poster is in two colours—black and orange—and is obtainable without wording, if desired. Handbills with the same design have also been produced.

Germany

The "*Canstеinsche Bibelanstalt*" (Canstein Bible Society) is to celebrate its 250th anniversary in May. Since the end of the war, the headquarters of the Society have been located in Westphalia (Western Germany), the home country of the Canstein family. The Bible Society was founded by Baron Carl Hildebrand von Canstein and since 1710 had operated in Halle.

The Cansteinsche Bibelanstalt was the forerunner of the large Bible Societies which came into being during the early decades of the 19th century, mostly at the instigation and with the assistance of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Within the framework of various social and other establishments founded by the well-known protestant August Hermann Francke in Halle, the Cansteinsche Bibelanstalt was able for more than two centuries to carry out a valuable work by printing and distributing countless Bibles and New Testaments, until these institutions were commandeered under the Nazi dictatorship and taken away from the Church. Since the war the Society has started again with a small publication programme.

Jubilee celebrations are to take place in Bielefeld, May 21-23. They are jointly organised by the Cansteinsche Bibelanstalt and the Church of Westphalia. A number of delegates from Bible Societies from all parts of the world will attend the meetings on their way back from the U.B.S. Council. An article on the Canstein Society was published in the *Bulletin* in 1954 (third quarter, No. 19, p.2).

*

The *Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt* (Stuttgart Bible Society) announces the publication of a new lectern Bible (32 x 21 cm.). Modern roman (antiqua) type (14 point) has been used. The text runs across the page but poetical sections are printed in verse form. References are given in red in the outside margin of the page.

An edition of the Book of Tobias with 30 illustrations (drawings and etchings) by Rembrandt is also about to come off the press in Stuttgart. Dr. H-M Rotermund, a Rembrandt expert, has prepared brief comments on each picture to help the ordinary reader to understand the painter's testimony. It is the hope of the Society to be able to issue a complete Bible with illustrations by Rembrandt.

*

A new translation of the New Testament in German has been prepared by the Rev. H. Bruns (Marburg), a pastor well known for his evangelistic activities. An attempt has been made through the wording of the paragraph headings to help make the text more directly relevant to the personal problems of the reader. Each section is completed by a short note containing explanations on difficult words and strange objects. Brunnen Verlag, Giessen, is the publisher.

*

For the first time after many years the *Evangelische Haupt-Bibelgesellschaft* (Berlin Bible Society) under whose licence all Scriptures for East Germany are produced, has been refused a stand in the Leipzig Spring Fair for lack of exhibition space.

*

The Bible Societies in East Germany issued, some eighteen months ago, the first instalment of a course for Bible readers which it was hoped would help people in the Church or on the fringe to relate the Gospel message more easily to their life and their present conditions.

The first instalment contained six letters with questions related to each; they dealt with: Genesis 1-4 (God and man); the Gospel of Luke (Who is

Jesus Christ?); the Acts of the Apostles (How was the Christian community born?); the Epistle of James (How does the Christian live?). The fifth letter gave some information on "What one must know about the Bible" and the last one discussed on the basis of selected passages "The Biblical message and marriage". The texts were prepared under an editorial committee by Dr. K. Zabel, General Secretary of the Bibelwerk (Federation of the Bible Societies in the D.D.R.) and the Rev. J. Adler, Theological Secretary of the E.H.B.

Another instalment is now in preparation: II Samuel and I Kings; selected Psalms; Isaiah; Gospel of John; Epistle to the Galatians; the Book of the Revelation.

Reporting on the response received in the churches, Dr. Zabel writes: Evidently many pastors find this booklet particularly useful for their work among adults, especially with those who in later years seek baptism or confirmation. They find this booklet of more educational value for adults than the Luterhan catechism. Others use it in their regular preparation of confirmation candidates, since it puts the Scriptures at the centre of the training, whereas the official plan places the catechism at the centre. Still other pastors use the booklet in the formation of Men's and Women's Groups, and for the Junge Gemeinde. For such groups the booklet is particularly useful, since it offers a plan of fortnightly study throughout the year. Pastors who are specially concerned for Bible mission use it as a basis for training those who intend to undertake some home visiting and to encourage the formation of House Bible Circles. There has also been a demand from some that a copy of the leaflet should be slipped into, or even printed in, each copy of the Bible. The leaflet has also been widely used at meetings in connection with Bible Sunday and Bible Mission Weeks.

The correction of the answers to the questions is left to the local pastor or to the responsible leader of the local or regional branch of the Home Mission work.

Greece

A committee of scholars and theologians has begun work on a new revised critical text of the New Testament in Greek.

The work has been undertaken by the Theological Faculty of the University of Athens which has access to several documents and manuscripts not available to editors of earlier editions. As a result, a spokesman said, it is believed that the new text will be the most accurate edition ever published.

When completed the new text is expected to replace the edition currently in use by Greek Orthodox churches. Publication is expected some time in 1960.

Haiti

An Advisory Committee of twelve members has now been appointed to the American Bible Society Agency in Haiti. Most of the members are Haitians and five of them laymen.

India

Writing in the National Christian Council Review of January about Bible translation work in Assam, the Rev. W. J. Culshaw, Translation Advisor to the *Bible Society of India and Ceylon*, reports that he is now in touch with translators in 41 languages in that area. Less than 2 years ago the first conference for translators ever held in Assam took place; over forty delegates representing 25 languages met at that time. Only five of them were missionaries. As in other branches of the work of the Church in Assam, much of the initiative in Bible translation has already passed into the hands of the nationals. This is a fact of the

utmost importance for all future planning. The emphasis of the programme was on the need for training, and it was a good augury to see the deep desire of all concerned to be better fitted for their tasks. The almost complete absence of literature in most of the languages means that there is little store of experience to draw on even in such 'mechanical' tasks as the preparation of manuscripts for the press and the reading of proofs, two of the subjects which found a place in the programme.

The Church in Assam, after sixty years of missionary activity in that country, numbers more than one million people and it is still an area of rapid growth. The population of the whole area is over ten millions, nearly half of them living in the hills and speaking a great variety of languages. In the Brahmaputra valley Assamese, the dominant language, is spoken by nearly all the population. Missionary progress has been slower there owing to the fact that Hinduism and Buddhism have been established there for centuries.

The whole Bible only exists in six languages of that area, the Assamese coming first, chronologically, with William Carey's version in 1832. The last Bible produced was the translation for the Lushai, one of the largest tribes; it appeared last year. The complete New Testament exists in thirteen languages; portions have been published in fourteen languages, Kabui-Naja and Riang (Manipur) having been added to the list in 1959.

Indonesia

The *Indonesian Bible Society* has received an import licence for all kinds of Scriptures in Indonesian languages, valid for a period of two years.

Those who are familiar with the hunger for reading matter in that country will be able to understand the deep gratitude with which this news was welcomed.

Japan

The *Japan Bible Society* has been engaged for the past weeks in a systematic campaign of Bible distribution throughout the city of Yokohama. The campaign is expected to last one year. In the first instance a team of five colporteurs have been set to work in the residential area of the town. Two members of the team are visiting the schools, where they have been authorised to sell Scriptures during the mid-day recess. The three others are engaged in house-to-house visitation. During the first seven weeks nearly 40,000 Scriptures were circulated. Strong opposition was met with in some quarters from Roman Catholics and from members of the Soka-Gakkai, a quickly growing Buddhist sect, with extreme right-wing views. One exception was that of the manager of a large whaling company, who bought 6,000 Gospels for distribution among the crews of outgoing boats.

The J.B.S. has decided to establish its training centre for colporteurs in Yokohama. The Society at present occupies thirty full-time colporteurs and forty part-time.

*

Okinawa islands have been visited on two occasions recently by Japan Bible Society secretaries. In November Mr. Nakai, secretary of the colportage department, called on the colporteur working in that area, and carried on colportage work with him for ten days. He also visited the Yaeyama Islands, to make arrangements for a colportage campaign planned for the present year.

Early in January Mr. M. Tanabe, Distribution Secretary, also visited Okinawa mainly to confer with the Okinawa Bible Committee and with

church leaders regarding a more vigorous programme of Scripture distribution.

The possibility of opening two new depots, to prepare attractive displays for the sales rooms and to give publicity to the work in religious and secular press was considered and proposals were made for consideration by the J.B.S.

▪

The training of colporteurs is one of the central concerns of the Japan Bible Society. The Rev. T. Miyakoda, The Society's General Secretary, writes the following regarding the present practice of the Society and its plans for the future:

Japanese people have hitherto been asking for the Scriptures. This situation is now changing rapidly. To-day they need more than before to be encouraged to buy them. Hence the need to improve upon our traditional methods of colportage. For successful colportage *experience based on solid faith* is the important requirement, but colporteurs should also have knowledge of new techniques for handling Scriptures. Scriptures are old books but they must be introduced with new understanding to the changing generations.

To have a training institute for colporteurs has for long been in the mind of the General Secretary, but this has not yet been realized. We have tentatively adopted the following method for colporteurs' training.

1. Have them live together as a team (a team is composed of four members), asking an experienced member to be a team leader and to instruct and educate the new members while they are staying and working together.

2. From Tokyo Bible House always supply materials for training (books, periodicals).

3. The General Secretary and Colportage Secretary periodically visit the teams in new places, staying with them for one or two days and continuing their instruction. Ask ministers of local churches to visit teams and have fellowship with colporteurs who attend to the local church meetings. Sometimes they are asked to make a witness—thus they are required to systematise their thought and method of working.

4. Three-day annual colporteurs' conferences are held with a well prepared programme. We have to spend time and money on these conferences. Small regional conferences are also held, bringing together at least three teams for two days (including national holidays).

5. Two teams are now at work in Yokohama city. We are starting to have lectures and talks for one hour in the morning before the colporteurs start out on their work. The lectures consist of Bible exposition, Christian history, talks on sociological and economic problems. Secretaries of various departments visit and give talks on the work of their department.

6. In the near future we are expecting to build a warehouse in Shibuya, in connection with which we are planning to build there rooms for colporteurs' lodgings and lecture rooms. We are planning to provide full-time colporteurs with three months instruction before they start out. At the same time voluntary colporteurs are asked to attend the lectures and be trained together with the full-time workers.

Kenya

As reported in a previous issue (No. 40, 1959, p.196) a nation-wide Bible week took place in Kenya in November, 1959. From a report from the Rev. F. J. Bedford, published in *The Bible in the World*, we quote:

The three aims of the campaign were clearly stated. The first was to recall Church Members to the Bible as being at the centre of the life of discipleship. The second aim was to present the Bible to the widest possible

public, as having an urgent and relevant message to our times. Thirdly, there was to be a determined effort to increase the circulation of the Scriptures.

A poster was designed, simple and clear, on the theme "The Bible Speaks Today". It was printed in English, in Swahili and in half-a-dozen vernaculars, and in one Indian language. Over ten thousand were distributed throughout the country. There was hardly a school, a church, a chief's post or a shop window where the simple statement "The Bible Speaks Today" did not appear.

Special pamphlets were also prepared in various languages stressing the importance of Bible Reading and its relevance to the modern day in which we live. Plans were made to distribute thirty-eight thousand Gospels, as far as possible to individuals. This was planned as a definite Evangelistic programme, and during the week hundreds of Christians distributed the Scriptures. It is hoped that this will help to focus all thoughts on a neglected ministry of the Church, and that this work will go on long after Bible Week is over. Special emphasis was made upon reaching all the patients in the hospitals with a copy of the Gospel of St. Luke.

The campaign was organised in a decentralised way; a large number of local committees were set up; the Bible Society Auxiliaries also undertook part of the planning; a series of bulletins were sent out to 450 Christian leaders of all denominations throughout the country, who had been enlisted for the campaign.

*

Bible Week opened with a broadcast service from St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Nairobi, when the Governor's message was read. This tribute to the Bible from the representative of Her Majesty the Queen in this country was deeply appreciated.

All over the country many hundreds of meetings were held, some of them with the attendance of over a thousand people. There were showings of Bible Society films in over a hundred different places. A national essay and poster competition was held which met with enthusiastic support. The Postmaster-General gave us ready help in providing a special cancellation die, so that all the thousands of letters sent out from Nairobi during the special week bore the postmark "Kenya Bible Week". This in itself was an excellent advertisement of our great aim.

In many centres the final day of Bible Week was marked by a united service in some public place. In Nairobi over two thousand people gathered on a large lawn in the front of the Law Courts. The Salvation Army band led the singing and the Rt. Rev. Obadiah Kariuki, Bishop of Fort Hall, gave a stirring message to the crowd of all races.

The final event of Bible Week was a broadcast service from Nairobi Cathedral when the Secretary for East Africa spoke to all helpers throughout the country. In some places groups of people hundreds of miles away had gathered to hear the service which formally closed Bible Week.

*

One of the most important features of the Bible Week in Nairobi was the Bible Exhibition held in one of the largest halls at the centre of the city. In spite of its low cost the exhibition was of a very high standard. It was prepared with the help of many volunteers; a number of voluntary stewards showed the visitors round.

An important section was devoted to the history of the English Bible and to translation work being done in East African languages. The influence of the Bible on the people's way of life and its relevance for the present day was also illustrated effectively. Thanks

to the material supplied by Societies and Agencies all over the world a U.B.S. stand was set up which, as Mr. Bedford writes: "was a witness to the world planning of Bible Society work".

*

A new Bible Society Auxiliary was established last November in Mombasa. This followed the creation of seven other Auxiliaries and branches in East Africa during the year. Auxiliaries sent in nearly £2,500 for Bible Society work in 1959, to the headquarters of the Agency. There are altogether 32 Auxiliaries and branches in this area.

*

Circulation from the new Bible House in Nairobi has exceeded 200,000 copies, that is more than twice as many as in the previous year when the Bible House had not been inaugurated.

Plans to increase circulation up to 350,000 are now being contemplated. The numbers of voluntary colporteurs (to whom a discount of 25% is granted and whose work proves most satisfactory) needs to be increased. It is also hoped to encourage secular bookshops to stock and sell Scriptures.

Korea

The Korean office of World Vision Inc., an American evangelistic organisation held, in Korea last December, its first National Scripture Memory Contest for orphans. In order to qualify a child had to memorise 120 verses during 1959. Two children were selected from each orphanage for a provincial contest and again two from each province were brought to Seoul for the final competition. World Vision Inc. plans to continue with similar projects.

Lebanon

An edition of 20,000 copies of Proverbs in the new Arabic revision has been issued in Beirut. This is the first Scripture portion published in the revised version.

Madagascar

Last autumn the Rev. F. J. Bedford, B.F.B.S. Secretary for East Africa, paid a two weeks' visit to Madagascar, meeting church and lay leaders and addressing some 25 gatherings. Two Bible vans supplied, the one by the B.F.B.S., the other by the Norwegian Bible Society, were dedicated on the occasion of the visit. Mr. Bedford also attended a session of the local Bible Society committee at which future possible developments in the work were considered, such as the appointment of a Malagasy to be in charge of contacts with the churches and promotion, the establishment of regional Auxiliary committees, the organisation of a youth conference, etc. Scriptures for Madagascar have been supplied by the Norwegian Bible Society for nearly ten years, the B.F.B.S. having opened the door ten years ago for co-operation on the part of the No.B.S. in the work in the island.

Mali

The Geneva Bible House (La Maison de la Bible), a Bible distributing agency with branches in France, Italy, Portugal, North Africa, Transvaal and Brazil, announces the opening of a new Bible House in Dakar (Mali, West Africa). It has taken three years to bring the project to fruition.

Mexico

The "Penzotti Institute", which was founded by the American Bible Society in 1956 in order to provide a year's course for colportage promoters who would help the churches in Latin America to launch Scripture distribution campaigns, plans to launch on June 6th, a short 12 weeks' course for non-Bible Society personnel. The course includes theoretical teaching on the Bible as a tool for evangelism, on the origin, history and translation of the Scriptures, on the organisation of Bible distribution campaigns, on

distribution and salesmanship techniques. But great emphasis is also put on the practical work of individual distribution and the organisation of campaigns.

Two students from Mexico have already registered for the one-year course which starts in May. One or two more from the Caribbean are also expected.

Netherlands

One of the consequences of the flooding in January of the northern suburb of Amsterdam, called Tuindorp, Oostzaan, when some 10,000 inhabitants were driven from their homes, was that many families lost their Bibles. According to its custom in such cases, the *Netherlands Bible Society* enabled the local churches to substitute the Bibles lost by their members by new copies, without cost.

*

The N.B.S. has started the production of a "Spoken Bible" by recording portions of the Bible on magnetic sound tape, for the use of the blind. A trial has already been made with part of the Psalms, and preparations for other parts of the Bible are well advanced. The plan is to record the entire Bible in the future, and to place the tapes at the free disposal of the blind.

*

Up till now the N.B.S. has been in the habit of sending a news bulletin several times a year to the committee members of its more than 800 Auxiliaries, whereas the other members received some folders every year.

In January, 1960, there appeared for the first time a four-page publication, similar to a newspaper, addressed to the Auxiliary committee members as well as to the other members, the latter category now numbering over 170,000, under the title "De Wereld in" (Into all the world).

This first issue was devoted to the world-wide work of the Bible Societies. Dr. R. P. Kramers, a linguist of the Society at Hong Kong, wrote an article under the heading: Bible Society work as a part of a greater set-up.

*

As an attempt to make the Bible accessible to everybody, a small booklet has just been published by the N.B.S. containing a translation of the Epistle to the Philippians in simplified Dutch.

Experience has shown that the Bible, even in the new Dutch version, is not yet sufficiently clear for the understanding of many, and so the N.B.S. decided to tackle the production of portions in simplified Dutch. This version of Philippians was prepared by a committee of theologians, a linguist and laymen. The idea is to have eventually the whole Bible so "translated".

*

In order to promote youth membership of the N.B.S. and to make the pupils of secondary schools more familar with Bible Society work, a brightly coloured folder appeared a short time ago. It is conspicuous for the picture of a large derrick, which hints at the double meaning of the Dutch "kraan", which may either mean a crane or a clever, energetic person. Below the picture there is the question: Are you a "kraan", too?

Of late, study weeks have regularly been included in the programme of normal schools on the theme of Bible Society work, both in the home country and abroad. Sometimes the future teachers accompany a Bible van on a colportage drive, and at the end of the study week they write a report on Bible Society work.

Students as well as teachers in seminaries and universities show great interest in such study weeks. The reports often reflect keen interest in

Bible Society work. Part of the study week is devoted to the translation work in simplified Dutch, when the students are asked to try their hand at this on a given portion of the Bible.

Norway

On January 14th, one year after Bishop Berggrav's death, the *Norwegian Bible Society* launched its appeal for an E. Berggrav Memorial Fund. "Berggrav held two offices", says the No.B.S. leaflet, which is signed by twenty well-known Norwegian personalities, lay people and theologians, "to which he was specially devoted and which were the last official positions he relinquished: that of Chairman of the Norwegian Bible Society and of President of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES. In the world-wide co-operation on translating and circulating the Bible in the greatest possible number of languages, Berggrav was the strategist with a global vision. Again and again he stressed the necessity of helping the 'young' Bible Societies in backward countries to achieve the greatest possible degree of independence and self support. To-day the Scriptures for Asia, Africa and Latin America are for the most part produced in the western world at the expense of the western Societies. One consequence of the increase in nationalism and in anti-western attitudes is the tendency to try to avoid financial and material help from the West, while at the same time the doors are tending to be open to communistic influence. We therefore have to realise that country after country may become closed to Bible aid from the West and consequently to the only realistic alternative to Communist ideology.

"The idea which Berggrav promoted was that we, while it is still possible, must give the Bible Societies in these countries the necessary means for domestic production of the Scriptures. They have to be supplied with composing machines, presses and binding machines and skilled workers as well, so that the work can go on if the frontiers should be closed".

The gifts received for the Fund will be used for any kind of project which may help Societies in missionary areas and threatened in their work by the lack of local means of Scripture production facilities. Indonesia is given as a possible area for such a project. The Fund in Norway is being administered by the No.B.S. It has been suggested that those in other countries who would like to contribute to the Fund might do so by sending their gifts to the national Bible Society in their country, earmarked "E. Berggrav Memorial Fund". As in Norway, the Berggrav Fund in each country will be used for the kind of projects indicated above.

*

The No.B.S. report that the publication of their new translation of the New Testament for young people, published last summer, has received a warm welcome among young people and among teachers and ministers working with them. Of the first edition of 36,000, half were sold within four months and a reprint is already necessary.

Foot-notes have been provided on 200-300 difficult words or expressions (marked by an arrow in the text). They are of three types: explanatory, slightly exegetical, textual. All the words are listed in an appendix for reference. Other appendices contain: a synoptical, chronological table of historical events in the Roman Empire, Palestine and in the life of Jesus and the disciples; a brief history of the canon and of translations in Norwegian and Danish and of missionary translations by Norwegian and Danish missionaries; the Jewish calendar in Jesus' time; a table of money and of weights and measures. A new set of maps has also been prepared for this volume.

More details on this edition can be found in an article published in the present issue of *The Bible Translator* (available from any Bible Society).

Philippines

Circulation in 1959 in the Philippines was the highest since 1899, the year when the Agency was opened. Over 400,000 volumes were circulated. One of the main contributory factors was the distribution in Greater Manila during the summer and autumn of more than 100,000 copies of the Sermon on the Mount. This campaign was undertaken with the co-operation of a large number of churches of all denominations. Each Portion contained a message from H. E. Carlos P. Garcia, President of the Philippines, commending the booklet and the reading of the Scriptures. The message said in part: "This excerpt from the Holy Bible has been a rich source of spiritual inspiration for ages past and its message has not lost its deep meaning and significance to the modern world. I have always maintained that whatever institutions man may build for his political, social, and economic advancement, these cannot long endure if they are not founded on the rock of moral practices and upright living. The Word of God should then be our best guide that we may live and work in peace and harmony with our fellow men and assure the continued progress of mankind in an atmosphere of Christian love and understanding".

The Philippine Bible House reports that "a flood of requests" was received for Bibles and New Testaments as a result of the campaign. The P.B.H. is considering a similar campaign in Cebu City, the second largest city in the Philippines.

Rhodesia

A Bible week was recently held in Salisbury. The Rev. M. W. Booth, the Rhodesias Agency secretary, reports the following:

"During the Salisbury Bible Week, the Principals of all the African Schools made arrangements to bring together the pupils who understood English, and sixteen schools were visited to tell the story of the Bible Society and the value and importance of the Bible in our lives and the growth of translation not only in Africa but elsewhere throughout the world. Ministers and teachers exercising the right of entry for religious instruction in European schools also told the story.

"Three large gatherings of Africans heard the story by the use of films and addresses. Buildings intended to seat five or six hundred by some means managed to accommodate twice the number. Each African congregation, as well as European churches, provided the opportunity for a contribution to the work of the Bible Society and the results were most encouraging. The entire programme of African activities was planned by the African ministers fraternal and spoke well for their sense of unity and accomplishment".

Switzerland

The Schaffhouse Bible Society celebrated its 180th anniversary in January. A special service was attended by some 600 people. A Bible exhibition was on show for two weeks in the town art museum and received many visitors. The Schaffhouse Bible Society is one of the founder members of the *Swiss Bible Society*. In connection with the celebration a special appeal was made for funds to help in the production by the Swiss Bible Society of Gospels for Mozambique as part of the B.F.B.S. Million Gospel Campaign for Africa.

Following the suggestion made recently at the conference of the Swiss Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church,encouraging the priests to give more prominence to the Bible in the

liturgical life of the Church, on the first Sunday in February, the Bishop of Sion presided over a ceremony during which a large lectern Bible was placed and opened near the main altar. In his address the Bishop explained that it was customary in the early Church to have the Bible, which is God's voice speaking, always near the Holy Sacrament which manifests God's presence. The Bishop also encouraged the faithful to have in their homes, besides the crucifix—the sign of the atonement—the Holy Scriptures, in which they will find light and comfort. Sion is the capital of one of the most Roman Catholic regions of Switzerland.

Turkey

Turkey is a country where Bible Society work is particularly hard. One encouraging aspect of colportage activity there is the possibility to circulate Scriptures among the widely scattered Armenian community. Recently, Mr. Jakup, one of the colporteurs of the Agency, travelled over 875 miles in Northern Anatolia in the company of a wealthy philanthropic American of Armenian origin. Eleven towns were visited and 23 Bibles, 55 New Testaments and 340 Portions distributed, mainly to Armenian families.

United States

Regional offices have recently been established by the *American Bible Society* in Chicago, Los Angeles and New York.

The new regional offices will be responsible for encouraging churches and related Christian organisations to distribute the Scriptures more widely, with special emphasis on missionary and evangelistic distribution to groups throughout the country that are politically, economically, racially and socially disenfranchised. These include prisoners in local, state and federal prisons; delinquent youth and their families; migrants; the blind, the unreached masses in large cities; ethnic groups and military personnel.

In addition, the regional offices will seek to encourage the use of the Scriptures by church members and others as a vital source of Christian conviction and living.

At a conference last fall of the Society's National Distribution and Headquarters Secretaries, the history and philosophy of national distribution of the Scriptures, and the resources available, were re-examined in the light of growing needs and new challenges. During the discussion, it became self-evident that in order to fulfil its fundamental missionary purpose, the Society must constantly improve its techniques, revise its organisational patterns and adapt its methods to the demands of the changing American scene. The new regional offices, each with an augmented staff of specialists, are being established in the light of this study.

*

The A.B.S. is urging all Americans to join in the nation's largest sunrise service by reading at dawn on Easter morning the resurrection message in the Gospel of John.

Two million copies of "He is Risen", a special booklet reprinting this message, are being made available both in the Authorised and in the Revised Standard Versions by the Society, to stimulate and encourage the sunrise reading.

The Bible Society suggests that churches and related groups in every community obtain supplies of the booklets and distribute them to such groups as hospital patients and the inmates of penal institutions, as well as to their own members.

*

In August, Chaplain Ivan L. Bennett, A.B.S. Field Secretary, forwarded a letter to 1,000 pastors in the Washington area, urging them to "encourage your people to join in an effort to read the Psalms between National Day of Prayer (October 7)

and Thanksgiving (November 26)". A special service was held in the Concourse of the Pentagon on the first day, in which the Secretary of the Army read the President's Proclamation and Chaplains from the three departments participated. Daily services were then conducted in the Pentagon Auditorium with meditations based upon the Psalms.

A similar series of services based on the Gospel of St. Mark was held in the Pentagon Concourse during the month of January. Chaplain Moore secured 1,000 copies of St. Mark for these services and reported that there was "not a copy left". Chaplain Bennett observed that "this combination of Reading-Distribution has great possibilities".

*

During the course of 1959, the A.B.S. circulated a total of 65,134 embossed volumes and Talking Books to nearly 3,000 individuals and 112 institutions, an increase of over 9,000 over the previous year.

Over a period of twenty-four years the Society has circulated 432,664 Talking Book records in English. It also produced, last year, its first edition of Talking Book records in Spanish, being two records containing the special selection of Biblical texts normally used by the A.B.S. for the blind.

*

A special distribution campaign was conducted early in December on the Island of Hawaii in which every house was visited and copies of Scriptures distributed. The A.B.S. forwarded to Hawaii 9,500 copies of the English Sermon on the Mount, 3,500 Japanese /English diglot Sermon on the Mount and 1,500 assorted Portions in Philippine dialects. Similarly on the island of Kaui a special distribution of 5,000 copies of the Christmas Message was undertaken. Approximately 1,000 copies of the Japanese illustrated St. Luke were distributed in this same campaign. Also 20,000 copies of the Christmas Message were sent to various mission stations in Alaska.

The A.B.S. also supplied stocks of Scriptures to Squaw Valley for distribution among the competitors and visitors to the Winter Olympic Games.

*

The A.B.S. has issued 5,000 copies of a set of 27 four-colour illustrations by John Lear for use in New Testaments or Portions. The pictures selected have been chosen from among those already produced for the same purpose in black and white. The illustrations have been mounted in such a way that they can be used in books of varying sizes by trimming the white margins.

*

The A.B.S. has produced two special editions of John's Gospel in the Bassa and Loma languages for the Billy Graham campaign in Liberia.

*

The first four million dollar annual budget for the A.B.S. was recommended last November at the conclusion of the 41st meeting of its Advisory Council. There were present 69 members and 23 guests representing 47 denominations, including every major denomination in the country, three Associations and the B.F.B.S. in Canada.

Noting that the Society will observe its 150th anniversary in 1966, the Council recommended that all denominations designate that year "as a time for special emphasis on Bible reading and sharing".

*

The New York Bible Society celebrated its 150th anniversary last November. The Society's goal is to provide every New York citizen with the Scriptures in his own language. It circulated last year more than one million Scriptures in 70 languages, mainly in hospitals, servicemen's centres, ships and immigration centres.

*

For the first time in 144 years of service to the churches, the A.B.S. distribution within the U.S.A. in 1959 exceeded ten million volumes. The exact figures were : 531,186 Bibles, 1,072,023 New Testaments and 8,465,750 Portions, making a total of 10,068,959 volumes.

United Bible Societies

Some part of the Bible has been published in 1,151 languages as at the end of December, 1959. Miss Hills, American Bible Society Librarian, has again kindly prepared the following statistics:

Languages in which the whole Bible has been published ..	219
Languages in which a complete Testament has been published	271
Languages in which at least a Gospel or some other whole book has been published ..	661
Total languages in which some part of the Bible has been published	1,151

Complete Bibles were printed in 1958 in *Guizpuzcoan Basque* (Spain) by a Roman Catholic publisher; in 1959 in *Lushai* and *Gurmukhi Punjabi*, both spoken in India, by the Bible Society of India and Ceylon, and in *Mende*, spoken in Sierra Leone, by the B.F.B.S.

First New Testaments were published by the A.B.S. in *Beti* (Cameroons) and *Totonac* (Mexico) and by the Bible Society of India and Ceylon in *Gangte* (Assam and Burma).

There are some eighty or more languages in which short passages or collections of passages have been published, but in which no complete book of the Bible has appeared.

For those who keep an up-to-date list of languages, please note that the following adjustments have also been made: Flemish has been removed as it is so closely related to Dutch. The term Low German has been made to cover 15th century publications as well as a 20th century New Testament. Chich Jieng (1916) has been restored as fourth Jieng dialect, and Red Bobo has been divided into Sanekuh Red Bobo (with N.T.) and Ouarkoye Red Bobo (portions only). These changes are reflected in the total figure above.

Scriptures were reported for the first time in:

Aguacateco	Guatemala	Mark	ABS	1958
Bilaan	Philippines	Mark	ABS	1959
Comanche	United States	Mark	ABS	1958
Tepeuxila Cuicatec	Mexico	John	ABS	1958
Dusun	North Borneo	John	NBSS, BFBS	1959
Hindustani*	India	Luke	BFBS	1914
Guerrero Mixteco	Mexico	Mark	ABS	1959
Kabui Naga	Manipur, India	Luke	BSIC	1959
Tenango Otomi	Mexico	Mark	ABS	1959
Sierra Otomi	Mexico	Mark	ABS	1959
Paiwan	Taiwan	Mark	ABS, BFBS, NBSS	1959
Riang	Assam, India	Mark, I John	BSIC	1959
Tojolabal	Mexico	Mark	ABS	1959
Bachajon Tzeltal	Mexico	Luke	ABS	1959

* This term has occasionally been used for Urdu and Hindi, but it is now added to the list to represent a developing form of speech in common use in north India, an amalgam of Urdu and Hindi. Experiments were made as early as 1914, but in 1958 and 1959 the B.S.I.C. published the Gospels.

Personalia

The **Rev. James M. Alexander,** M.A., B.D., was appointed General Secretary, in succession to the Rev. Dr. Wm. C. Somerville. Mr. Alexander was minister of Innerleithen Old Church at the time of his appointment; he was formerly a missionary of the Church of Scotland in Livingstonia, Nyasaland, from 1938 to 1952. During his time in Africa he shared in the production and revision of the Psalms, the Prophets and St. Mark's Gospel in the Myakusa-Ngonde language.

*

Director Emil Diehl, D.D. has retired from his position of director of the Priviligierte Württemburgische Bibelanstalt (Stuttgart Bible Society) for reasons of age and ill health. He has served the Society for 41 years. **Director Emil Winter** has been appointed Dr. Diehl's successor.

*

Mr. Fred L. Denton has been appointed an Associate Secretary in the Overseas Department of the American Bible Society with the title of Field Consultant. His main responsibility will be to give technical counsel in management and finance in the A.B.S. Agencies, particularly in Latin America. Mr. Denton will be located in Mexico. An active Episcopalian, he was until recently head of an import firm in Panama and has served on the boards of various commercial companies.

*

The British and Foreign Bible Society announced the following changes of title as from the beginning of this year:

Mr. Norman Bratt, Producton Sec.
(formerly Publishing Manager).

Mr. G. S. Kelting, Assistant for Distribution
(formerly Progress Officer).

Mr. B. N. Tattersall, Financial Sec.
(formerly Accountant).

Mr. A. Befroy, Accountant
(formerly Assistant Accountant).

Mr. D. A. True, Assistant Accountant

The above changes do not denote any significant change in responsibility

*

The **Rev. C. R. Kenyon** has been sent to Seoul at the request of the Korean Bible Society by the B.F.B.S. as a Fraternal Secretary to help Mr. Young Bin Im in his many duties. Mr. Kenyon has been seconded for a limited period for this task by the Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church in Australia. He has already served several years in Korea as a missionary.